The Complete PROSE of T. S. Eliot

The Critical Edition

VOLUME 2

The Perfect Critic 1919–1926

edited by

ANTHONY CUDA &

RONALD SCHUCHARD

VISIT…

The COMPLETE PROSE *of*
T. S. Eliot

RONALD SCHUCHARD, *General Editor*

The COMPLETE PROSE *of*

T. S. Eliot

THE CRITICAL EDITION

VOLUME 2: *The Perfect Critic, 1919–1926*

Edited by ANTHONY CUDA and

RONALD SCHUCHARD

JOHNS HOPKINS
UNIVERSITY PRESS
BALTIMORE

faber and faber
LONDON

This book was brought to publication
with the assistance of the Hodson Trust.

Eliot Prose © Estate of TS Eliot 2014
Editorial Apparatus © Faber and Faber Ltd and
the Johns Hopkins University Press 2014
All rights reserved. Published 2014
9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

The Johns Hopkins University Press
2715 North Charles Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21218-4363
www.press.jhu.edu

ISBN-13: 978-1-4214-1295-5
ISBN-10: 1-4214-1295-0

CONTENTS

The Perfect Critic, 1919-1926: Introduction xiii
Editorial Procedures and Principles xliii
Acknowledgments li
List of Abbreviations lv
List of Illustrations lix

1919
Marivaux 1
The New Elizabethans and the Old. A review of *The New Elizabethans: A First Selection of the Lives of Young Men Who Have Fallen in the Great War,* by E. B. Osborn 10
The Post-Georgians. A review of *Wheels: A Third Cycle*, ed. Edith Sitwell 16
American Literature. A review of *A History of American Literature,* vol. II, ed. William P. Trent et al. 21
A Romantic Aristocrat 26
Kipling Redivivus. A review of *The Years Between*, by Rudyard Kipling 33
Kipling Redivivus. To the Editor of *The Athenaeum* 40
A Sceptical Patrician. A review of *The Education of Henry Adams: An Autobiography* 41
Beyle and Balzac. A review of *A History of the French Novel, to the Close of the Nineteenth Century,* vol. II, by George Saintsbury 48
Criticism in England. A review of *Old and New Masters*, by Robert Lynd 54
The Education of Taste. A review of *English Literature during the Last Half-Century*, by J. W. Cunliffe 60
Reflections on Contemporary Poetry [IV]. A review of *Naked Warriors*, by Herbert Read; *The Charnel Rose, Senlin: A Biography, and Other Poems*, by Conrad Aiken; and *vingt-cinq poèmes*, by Tristan Tzara 66

A Foreign Mind. A review of *The Cutting of an Agate*, by W. B. Yeats 72
The Romantic Generation, If It Existed. A review of *Currents and Eddies in the English Romantic Generation*, by Frederick E. Pierce 77
"Rhetoric" and Poetic Drama 83
Was There a Scottish Literature? A review of *Scottish Literature: Character and Influence*, by G. Gregory Smith 92
Christopher Marlowe 97
Tradition and the Individual Talent 105
Swinburne as Critic 115
Hamlet 122
Murmuring of Innumerable Bees. An unsigned review of *Coterie: An Illustrated Quarterly, 2* 129
Humanist, Artist, and Scientist. A review of *La Pensée italienne au XVIe siècle et le courant libertin* and *L'Éthique de Giordano Bruno et le deuxième dialogue du Spaccio*, by J.-Roger Charbonnel 132
War-paint and Feathers. A review of *The Path on the Rainbow: An Anthology of Songs and Chants from the Indians of North America*, ed. George W. Cronyn 137
The Method of Mr. Pound. A review of *Quia Pauper Amavi*, by Ezra Pound 141
Our Inaccessible Heritage. To the Editor of *The Athenaeum* 147
Mr. Pound and His Poetry. To the Editor of *The Athenaeum* 149
Ben Jonson 150
The Preacher as Artist. A review of *Donne's Sermons: Selected Passages*, ed. Logan Pearsall Smith 165
The Duchess of Malfi at the Lyric: and Poetic Drama 170
The Local Flavour 176

1920
Swinburne as Poet 181
William Blake 187
The Phoenix Society. To the Editor of *The Athenaeum* 193
Euripides and Professor Murray 195
A Brief Treatise on the Criticism of Poetry 202
Modern Tendencies in Poetry 212

Dante 226
The Criticism of Poetry. To the Editor of the *TLS* 238
The Poetic Drama. A review of *Cinnamon and Angelica: A Play*, by John Middleton Murry 240
Philip Massinger 244
Artists and Men of Genius. To the Editor of *The Athenaeum* 260
The Perfect Critic 262
The Perfect Critic. To the Editor of *The Athenaeum* 273
A French Romantic. To the Editor of the *TLS* 275
The Possibility of a Poetic Drama 278
A Note on the American Critic 286
The French Intelligence 291
Introduction. *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism* 294

1921
Autobiographical Note. *Harvard College Class of 1910, Secretary's Fourth Report* 300
The Romantic Englishman, the Comic Spirit, and the Function of Criticism 302
The Lesson of Baudelaire 306
Andrew Marvell 309
Prose and Verse 324
London Letter: March, 1921 333
London Letter: May, 1921 341
John Dryden 350
London Letter: July, 1921 362
London Letter: September, 1921 369
The Metaphysical Poets 375
The Metaphysical Poets. To the Editor of the *TLS* 386
Poets and Anthologies. To the Editor of the *TLS* 388

1922
The Three Provincialities 390
London Letter: April, 1922 394
Lettre d'Angleterre (May 1922) 399
London Letter: June, 1922 406
London Letter: August, 1922 411

To the Editor of *The Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury* 416
Marie Lloyd 418
Lettre d'Angleterre: Le style dans la prose anglaise contemporaine (Dec 1922) 424

1923
To the Editor of *The Daily Mail* 430
To the Literary Editor of *The Chicago Daily News* 432
Dramatis Personae 433
To the Literary Editor of *The Globe and Commercial Advertiser* 438
John Donne. A review of *Love Poems of John Donne* 440
Ben Jonson. To the Editor of *The Nation and the Athenaeum* 445
The Function of a Literary Review 446
Contemporary English Prose 448
Andrew Marvell. A review of *Miscellaneous Poems*, by Andrew Marvell 455
The Function of Criticism 458
The Classics in France – and in England 469
The Beating of a Drum. A review of *Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama*, by Olive Mary Busby; and *The Sacred Dance: A Study in Comparative Folklore*, by W. O. E. Oesterley 471
Ulysses, Order, and Myth. A review of *Ulysses*, by James Joyce 476
A Preface to Modern Literature: Being a Conspectus, Chiefly of English Poetry, Addressed to an Intelligent and Inquiring Foreigner 482
Lettre d'Angleterre (Nov 1923) 489
Marianne Moore. A review of *Poems* and *Marriage*, by Marianne Moore 495

1924
To the Editor of *The Transatlantic Review* 500
Four Elizabethan Dramatists: A Preface to an Unwritten Book 503
A Prediction in Regard to Three English Authors: Writers Who, Though Masters of Thought, are Likewise Masters of Art 513
A Commentary (Apr 1924) 521
A Commentary (July 1924) 529

An untitled review of *The Growth of Civilization* and *The Origin of Magic and Religion*, by W. J. Perry 536
A Commentary (Oct 1924) 539
Preface to *Homage to John Dryden: Three Essays on Poetry of the Seventeenth Century* 546
A Neglected Aspect of Chapman 548
A Brief Introduction to the Method of Paul Valéry 559

1925
A Commentary (Jan 1925) 567
On the Eve: A Dialogue [with Vivien Eliot] 572
A Commentary (Apr 1925) 576
The Ballet. A review of *The Dance: An Historical Survey of Dancing in Europe*, by Cecil J. Sharp and A. P. Oppé; and *Mudrās: The Ritual Hand-Poses of the Buddha Priests and Shiva Priests*, by Tyra De Kleen 581
Rencontre 585
Why Rural Verse. A review of *Spring Thunder and Other Poems*, by Mark Van Doren 589
Autobiographical Note. *Harvard College Class of 1910, Quindecennial Report* 592
English Satire. An unsigned review of *English Satire and Satirists*, by Hugh Walker 593
An Italian Critic on Donne and Crashaw. An unsigned review of *Secentismo e marinismo in Inghilterra: John Donne – Richard Crashaw*, by Mario Praz 596
Shakespeare and Montaigne. An unsigned review of *Shakspeare's Debt to Montaigne*, by George Coffin Taylor 600
Wanley and Chapman. An unsigned review of *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association*, vol. XI, collected by Oliver Elton 603

1926
The Clark Lectures. Lectures on the Metaphysical Poetry of the Seventeenth Century with Special Reference to Donne, Crashaw and Cowley 609
[Author's Preface] 609
Lecture I: Introduction 610
Lecture II: Donne and the Middle Ages 628

Lecture III: Donne and the *Trecento* 648
Lecture IV: The Conceit in Donne 669
Lecture V: Donne's Longer Poems 686
Lecture VI: Crashaw 705
Lecture VII: Cowley and the Transition 725
Lecture VIII: The Nineteenth Century 742
Textual Notes 759
The Idea of a Literary Review 762
A Popular Shakespeare. An unsigned review of *The Works of Shakespeare*, vols. I-III. Introductions by Charles Whibley 768
Introduction to *Savonarola: A Dramatic Poem*, by Charlotte Eliot 771
A Commentary (Apr 1926) 777
Mr. Robertson and Mr. Shaw. A review of *Mr. Shaw and "The Maid,"* by J. M. Robertson 781
An untitled review of *All God's Chillun Got Wings* (with *Desire under the Elms* and *Welded*), by Eugene O'Neill 783
A Commentary (June 1926) 785
English Verse Satire. An unsigned review of *A Book of English Verse Satire*, ed. A. G. Barnes 790
The Influence of Ovid. An unsigned review of *Ovid and his Influence*, by Edward Kennard Rand 795
The Author of "The Burning Babe." An unsigned review of *The Book of Robert Southwell*, by Christobel M. Hood 797
Plague Pamphlets. An unsigned review of *The Plague Pamphlets of Thomas Dekker*, ed. F. P. Wilson 801
Creative Criticism. An unsigned review of *Creative Criticism: Essays on the Unity of Genius and Taste*, by J. E. Spingarn 805
Chaucer's "Troilus." An unsigned review of *The Book of Troilus and Criseyde*, by Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. Robert Kilburn Root 807
American Prose. An unsigned review of *The Outlook for American Prose*, by Joseph Warren Beach; and S. P. E. Tract No. XXIV, which includes *Notes on Relative Clauses*, by Otto Jespersen, and *American Slang*, by Fred Newton Scott 812
Lancelot Andrewes 817
A Commentary (Oct 1926) 830
Mr. Read and M. Fernandez. A review of *Reason and Romanticism: Essays in Literary Criticism*, by Herbert Read; and *Messages*, by Ramon Fernandez 834

Note sur Mallarmé et Poe 843
Hooker, Hobbes, and Others. An unsigned review of *The Social and Political Ideas of Some Great Thinkers of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. F. J. C. Hearnshaw 848
Massinger. An unsigned review of *Étude sur la collaboration de Massinger avec Fletcher et son groupe*, by Maurice Chelli; and *Massinger's A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, ed. A. H. Cruickshank 852
More and Tudor Drama. An unsigned review of *Early Tudor Drama: Medwall, the Rastells, Heywood, and the More Circle*, by A. W. Reed 856
Sir John Davies 860
Early Tudor Drama. To the Editor of the *TLS* 868
Medieval Philosophy. An unsigned review of *History of Mediaeval Philosophy*, by Maurice De Wulf 870
Mr. J. M. Robertson and Shakespeare. To the Editor of *The Nation and the Athenaeum* 874
Whitman and Tennyson. A review of *Whitman: An Interpretation in Narrative*, by Emory Holloway 876

Index 881

This page intentionally left blank

THE PERFECT CRITIC, 1919-1926
Introduction

Volume 1 of *The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot*, *Apprentice Years*, spans the years 1905 to 1918, beginning with a story composed when Eliot was a teenager at the Smith Academy in St. Louis and ending with a review written when he was thirty years old and the author of *Prufrock and Other Observations* (1917). Volume 2, *The Perfect Critic*, covers the period 1919 to 1926, documenting the young poet's emergence as an authoritative and commanding critical voice in twentieth-century letters. The first volume follows the gradual curve of Eliot's intellectual formation: as an undergraduate at Harvard, a doctoral candidate in philosophy at Harvard and at Oxford, a reviewer of philosophical books, an Extension lecturer, and finally a provocative young literary critic. The essays and reviews in this second volume trace the swift and astonishing arc of his rise to international prominence as an avant-garde poet, an incisive critic of literature and culture, and an editor of a successful and celebrated London journal. These seven years register the seismic shift in modern poetry that comes with the publication of *The Waste Land* (1922), and they are witness also to the appearance of *Ara Vos Prec* (1920) and Eliot's first collected volume of verse, *Poems, 1909-1925* (1925). So it is remarkable to realize that these were also the years that saw the publication of many of his most influential and enduring essays, including "Tradition and the Individual Talent," "Hamlet," "The Metaphysical Poets," and "*Ulysses*, Order, and Myth." These few magisterial early essays furnish us with the signal concepts and phrases that have made Eliot's criticism a permanent feature of our monographs, syllabi, and anthologies, including the "extinction of personality," the "objective correlative," the "dissociation of sensibility," and the "mythical method." Perhaps it is even more remarkable, then, that he published not less than 130 essays, reviews, and letters during this brief time; that he saw into print two important prose volumes, *The Sacred Wood* (1920) and *Homage to John Dryden* (1924); and that he was chosen to deliver, in 1926, the prestigious Clark lectures at Trinity College, Cambridge.

In a two-part essay from 1920 titled "The Perfect Critic," Eliot attempts to indicate the means by which literary criticism should discern its proper

object and distinguish its unique task from other critical activities. As the essay draws to a close, he adds: "The end of the enjoyment of poetry is a pure contemplation from which all the accidents of personal emotion are removed."[1] Had the accidents and circumstances of Eliot's own personal life been perfect – had he enjoyed independent wealth, a fulfilling and supportive family life, and outstanding health – this period of intense creativity and prolific critical writing would still have been an extraordinary achievement. As it was, approaching the ideals set out in "The Perfect Critic" demanded an extraordinary labor undertaken in spite of the challenges of his private and professional life.

* * * *

Henry Ware Eliot Sr., the poet's father, died unexpectedly less than a week into 1919. Since Eliot's last visit home four years earlier, he had wanted desperately to publish a book in the United States, to persuade his parents – especially his father – that he had not "made a mess of my life, as they are inclined to believe" (*L1* 315). Instead, the devastating news of his father's death arrived while he was in the midst of the least productive months since his arrival in London. He had grown increasingly concerned about Vivien, whose health had taken a downward turn and who required much care and attention. Despite his own illness, Eliot had twice believed himself newly enlisted in U. S. military intelligence, only to be turned down at the last moment as a result of bureaucratic muddle and confusion. He had become apprehensive and anxious, his wife reported, "about his mind not acting as it used to do" and about his writing "falling off" (*L1* 309). His doctor urged a period of complete rest, and Vivien persuaded him to sign a contract with her that prohibited all writing and reading for three months. Though he had been publishing essays and reviews with increasing frequency over the previous two years, and though he had begun to sense that he was "breaking open" the safe, in his words, of London literary culture, Eliot could still only claim authorship of two slim volumes: *Prufrock and Other Observations* (1917), the title poem of which he already feared to be a swan song, and *Ezra Pound: His Metric and Poetry* (1917), which had been issued anonymously over a year before (*L1* 476). Now his only prospect for publishing a book in America was a miscellany of prose and verse, cobbled together, he told his patron and friend, the New York attorney John Quinn, "under high pressure in the overworked, distracted existence of the last two years": "I am not at all proud of the book" (*L1* 315). The American publisher

Alfred A. Knopf held the manuscript for several months and then declined to publish it, and although Quinn promised to redouble his efforts to place the book, Eliot feared that he was back where he began.

* * * *

It was in the midst of this disappointment, however, that Eliot received an unexpected invitation from the English essayist and editor John Middleton Murry to join him as co-editor of the historic British weekly, *The Athenaeum*. Murry had recently been appointed editor and, in the attempt to restore the once-formidable reputation of the literary and cultural journal from the doldrums of infighting and partisan politics, was rallying his intellectual friends at Bloomsbury and Garsington to write for him. The "new *Athenaeum*," he announced to Lytton Strachey, "is shortly to arise like a phoenix."[2] Murry had not met Eliot in person but was present at Lady Ottoline Morrell's 1917 Easter party at Garsington Manor when the art critic Clive Bell arrived bearing a dozen copies of the recently-published *Prufrock and Other Observations*. Katherine Mansfield took one and read the title poem aloud.[3] According to Eliot's later account, it was solely on the strength of Murry's impression of *Prufrock* that, early in March 1919, Murry offered him the assistant editorship.[4] Over dinner at his house in Hampstead, he confided to Eliot that he preferred him over anyone in England, and Murry offered him a two-year contract at a substantially higher salary than he was earning at Lloyds Bank.

Eliot agonized over the decision. The editorship would offer greater financial freedom and a more widespread critical renown than had his similar work at the *Egoist*, but the position promised little security and would require much greater exertion. He feared that the demanding schedule of turning out copy for a weekly "would exhaust me for genuine creative work" (*L1* 331). After much deliberation, he declined the position. Flattered by Murry's trust in his critical judgment, however, and reassured by the security of a new and more lucrative post dealing with economics and foreign affairs at the bank, Eliot immediately set about writing regular reviews to appear in the resuscitated *Athenaeum*. The slate was clear for this new start: his health was improving; the Hogarth Press was bringing out his *Poems* (1919), a slim pamphlet of seven works composed over the preceding two years; and his last year of Extension lecturing was coming to an end. Eliot later recalled that Murry "proved from the start of the new *Athenaeum* to be a first-rate editor," and the two men, who would later disagree so vehemently, found

themselves in lockstep on a number of pressing matters.[5] Upon receiving Eliot's fourth contribution in less than a month, Murry wrote to him not only about the deepening of their intellectual kinship but also about the role they could play in hastening the advent of a new critical era. "What a great pleasure it is to have you working with me," he told Eliot in April 1919: "I only hope that the collaboration will not be interrupted until we have restored criticism" (*L1* 340). For his part, Eliot regarded the *Athenaeum* reviews as his best critical work yet, "longer and better," he remarked to Quinn, "than any of those for the *Egoist*" (*L1* 354). Over the following sixteen months, from April 1919 to August 1920, he published thirty reviews and six letters to the editor. By the time the *Athenaeum* celebrated its one-year anniversary, a reviewer in the *Observer* could declare that Eliot, a critic "hardly to be matched in British or North American letters today," was "known to the world at large through the columns of the *Athenaeum*."[6]

It was during this immensely fruitful period that he published in the *Egoist* the two-part essay that garnered him such enduring renown in later years, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," in which he emphasizes the need for an "historical sense"; conceptualizes the dynamic and mutable order of the literary tradition; and famously distinguishes between "the man who suffers and the mind which creates."[7] It was also during the *Athenaeum* period that he first aligned himself with journalist and scholar J. M. Robertson, whose controversial distintegrationist theories about the Shakespearean canon in *The Problems of Hamlet* (1919) became the basis for Eliot's formulation of the "objective correlative" as well as for his notorious claims about the "artistic failure" of Shakespeare's most hallowed play.[8] Eliot also immersed himself in the sermons of John Donne, in whose marmoreal prose style he detected a sense of self-consciousness unique to the era, a model for "the artist as an Eye curiously, patiently watching himself as a man."[9] Donne's mastery of analogy and repetition united his sermons, in Eliot's mind, with the Buddha's Fire Sermon, which he had studied at Harvard years before and which later reappeared with such creative force in *The Waste Land*. In a review in *Art & Letters* from this period as well, he meditates on Christopher Marlowe's metrical and syntactic innovations in dramatic unrhymed pentameter, and this painstaking study prompted Eliot to envision a longer series of articles (which he later continued in the *TLS*) dealing with the development of blank verse in the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras.[10] And in another *Art & Letters* essay, he turns his attention to the eighteenth-century French playwright Pierre de Marivaux, whose rare

combination of detached emotional analysis and biting social comedy became, for Eliot, a model of poetic caricature. Much as Ben Jonson had done, Marivaux mastered the sort of swift, fierce, and unsentimental portraiture that Eliot himself was attempting to implement in the "quatrain poems" from this time, including "Sweeney Erect" and "Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar" (1919), both of which also appeared in *Art & Letters*. So many of his writings from this explosive early period, including his shrewd and searching reviews of the work of Rudyard Kipling (in "Kipling Redivivus"), W. B. Yeats (in "A Foreign Mind"), and Ezra Pound (in "The Method of Mr. Pound"), have remained outside of Eliot's critical canon, not least because they were left behind when it came time for him to select and assemble the essays that would comprise his first prose volume, *The Sacred Wood*.

* * * *

"It ought to be possible," Eliot remarked in 1919, "to write review articles which should be worth cobbling into a book. . . . it is difficult to give up the idea that a really good article is worth preserving."[11] With new books of verse appearing in both England and America – *Ara Vos Prec* and *Poems* (1920) – and with a quickly growing collection of reviews and essays from the past year, Eliot turned his attention back to cobbling together a volume of prose that would cement his early reputation as a critic. At first he envisioned a book of essays on the theory and craft of poetry, which would build upon a revised version of the well-attended lecture that he gave for the Arts League of Service in October 1919, "Modern Tendencies in Poetry." There, as in "Tradition and the Individual Talent," he concerns himself with impersonality, with the need for foreign influences on contemporary poetry in English, and with finding the "objective equivalent" for states of feeling.[12] He even allowed the Egoist Press to publicize as forthcoming a volume to be titled "The Art of Poetry," but the project eventually fell by the wayside. He also hoped to revise and adapt several of the *Athenaeum* essays to include in a book to be called "Studies in Renaissance Literature," which he hoped to publish with Richard Cobden-Sanderson, later the printer of the *Criterion*. He briefly considered an offer from publisher Martin Secker to write a book on Stendhal. "I find it very difficult," he told Quinn as he was sifting through the mounting possibilities that were presenting themselves now, "to keep in front of me the things I want to do most" (*L1* 374).

Since the beginning of the year, Eliot had also been in contact with the British publisher Sir Algernon Methuen, who had encouraged him in February: "I should like very much to consider the possibility of bringing out a volume of your Essays" (*L1* 447, n. 3). By the second week of May, Eliot had signed a contract with Methuen, whom he regarded as "one of the best London publishers," for a single prose book of miscellaneous selected essays, with the potential for another volume on Elizabethan literature to come afterward (*L1* 464-65). In the following months, Eliot combed through his work from the past year to choose the most valuable; he decided upon seventeen of about forty essays and reviews, all published after he began writing for the *Athenaeum*. He submitted the manuscript at the beginning of August, and in the following month, recruited Ezra and Dorothy Pound to help him hurriedly review and revise proofs: "it entailed a lot of work," he told his mother, "what with all the quotations in various languages which had to be verified and were found to have lots of mistakes in them" (*L1* 502). In November 1920 the first copies of *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism* arrived at his doorstep.

A primary focus of *The Sacred Wood*, perhaps its most insistent refrain and point of reference, is the practice of literary criticism itself. Eliot likely derived the volume's title from Sir James Frazer's description, in his monumental *The Golden Bough* (1890-1915), of the ancient ritual wherein the candidate for priest-king of the wood could assume that sacred office only by defeating an elder predecessor, who stood constant watch in the sacred grove. The opening essays of *The Sacred Wood* take careful aim at Eliot's own predecessors, the "elders" of the literary establishment, including J. C. Squire and the *London Mercury* group, Edward Marsh and the Georgian poets, Edmund Gosse and George Wyndham, Arthur Symons and Gilbert Murray, all of whose critical missteps he attempts to correct by turning not only to classics like Aristotle and Dante but to contemporaries like French critics Remy de Gourmont and Julien Benda, representatives of the organizing, orderly, and universal mind of Europe rather than of the disorderly and parochial minds of England. In the introduction, he quotes approvingly from Arnold's *Essays in Criticism* and delineates the temptations that lead contemporary critics astray from their true task. The titles of the next two essays, "The Perfect Critic" and "Imperfect Critics," help to sharpen the book's focus, and Eliot appends, as an epigraph to the former, a description by Gourmont of the fundamental task of the critic: to arrange into law one's personal impressions ("Ériger en lois ses impressions personnelles").[13]

Merely to convey one's impressions, Eliot explains, is not enough. Nor is it acceptable to allow one's ideas to calcify into dogma or even into method. The perfect critic must devote himself entirely to the object at hand, analyze and organize his impressions of the object, and generalize from these impressions. To be successful, he must marshal a rare combination of "sensitiveness, erudition, sense of fact and sense of history, and generalizing power."[14]

The lack of one or more of these qualities is what unites the shorter pieces that Eliot chose to include in "Imperfect Critics," a composite essay that brings together, under a new title, five brief and otherwise unrelated essays, three of which originally appeared in the *Athenaeum*. These disparate pieces, after careful revision to amplify their arguments and remove evidence of their origins in the periodical press, now assumed a unity and direction that they had not formerly possessed. And the critical foibles that Eliot had formerly remarked in passing – Swinburne's premature conclusions; George Wyndham's imbalance and parochialism; Charles Whibley's lack of the dissociative faculty – these failings now assume, in this unified context, the appearance of exemplary defects in a paradigm of the critical sensibility.

Though the subsequent essays veer away from contemporary critical practices toward the giants of the Western literary canon – Jonson, Shakespeare, Marlowe, Dante – they nonetheless sustain the overall focus on the analytic and dissociative processes of the critical mind. If Ben Jonson is "damned by the praise that quenches all desire to read the book," it is because critics have not offered a "living criticism" of his work.[15] If we have lost sight of the real "problem" of *Hamlet*, it is because the nineteenth century offered us a self-absorbed criticism of Shakespeare that remains, Eliot contends, "the most misleading kind possible."[16] And if we fail to grasp the unity of thought and feeling in Dante's *Commedia*, it is because thinkers like Paul Valéry – whose misjudgment Eliot emphasized when he was heavily revising "Dante as a Spiritual Leader" (1920) – have failed to recognize the true aims of philosophic poetry. Eliot brings *The Sacred Wood* to conclusion elegantly by quoting a line from the *Purgatorio*, one which he held firmly in memory by this time and which would reappear throughout his later work: "Onde convenne legge per fren porre" ("Therefore it was necessary to impose law as a curb").[17] Dante's insistence on the necessity and divine origin of law offers a resounding affirmation of the Gourmontian principle with which Eliot began the book's first essay, the organization of personal impression into law. The concept of law stands at either end of *The Sacred Wood*, law not as a system of inflexible rules or dogma, but as a set of

compelling propositions generalized from thought and feeling, as the product of the critic's emotional and intellectual discipline.

The book drew a mixture of high praise and bitter critique in the periodical press, where Eliot's sweeping erudition and surprising authority not infrequently provoked and bewildered. Robert Lynd called its author "an undertaker rather than a critic"; Conrad Aiken criticized his longtime friend's perplexity, obscurity, and "lack of coherence"; and Robert McAlmon confidently predicted that Eliot "will not be a critic in any worthy sense."[18] But in literary and academic circles, *The Sacred Wood* squarely hit its mark, leaving profound and lasting impressions. Cambridge scholar E. M. W. Tillyard later recalled buying the book "as soon as it came out" and immediately recognizing the importance of even its most provocative chapters, both for himself and for his students: "I cannot say I liked them when I read them first. They made me uncomfortable and I knew they could not be ignored. . . .There was enough in the *Sacred Wood* for the young men in search of novelty to seize upon and develop and to work up into a creed."[19] Richard Aldington wrote in defense of the book to Amy Lowell, appealing to her creative sensibility: "I cannot conceive how any artist can read the two essays 'The Perfect Critic' and 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' without being immensely interested and stimulated."[20] And F. R. Leavis later recalled his first encounter with Eliot's work as a definitive and profound awakening: "I bought the *Sacred Wood* just after it came out, in 1920. For the next few years I read it through several times a year, pencil in hand."[21]

* * * *

Reviewing for the front page of the *Times Literary Supplement* marked a major turning point in Eliot's career as a critic. His reviews for the *Athenaeum*, which were such an important step forward just two years before, later came to seem only an "apprenticeship" for these scholarly, authoritative "leader" essays in the most widely read literary periodical in England. In fact, his distinctive and increasingly well-known *Athenaeum* reviews nearly prevented his work at the *TLS* altogether. When Eliot was brought to the attention of the editor of the *TLS*, Bruce Richmond feared that the avant-garde poet would consider the paper "too old-fashioned" and, in addition, that he had become "rather the property of the *Athenaeum*."[22] On the contrary, Eliot had already begun to sense his shared enthusiasm with Murry waning and a deep intellectual rift opening between them. In addition, the scattered, unrelated *Athenaeum* reviews, which demanded

such effort to hammer into unity in *The Sacred Wood*, seemed much less desirable than the prospect of a series of highly selective and in-depth essays on dramatic verse for the *TLS*. At Richard Aldington's suggestion, Richmond met with Eliot and offered him the chance to write exclusively on Elizabethan literature or, as Eliot later recalled his brief, "Elizabethan and Jacobean poetry, but chiefly dramatic poetry."[23] He had read widely in the drama, verse, and prose of the Elizabethans in preparation for the last of his three-year course of Extension lectures at Southall. So in addition to the prestige of writing for the front page of the *TLS* – it was "the highest honour possible in the critical world of literature," he told his mother – he would finally have the opportunity to sustain a single line of inquiry and assemble an unified argument, one that he believed would have direct bearing on the direction of contemporary poetry and criticism (*L1* 404).

All reviews for the *TLS* were published anonymously; although his readers frequently recognized his work, Eliot nonetheless regarded anonymity as yet another lesson in critical discipline. Under Richmond's direction, he later recalled, "I learnt to moderate my dislikes and crotchets, to write in a temperate and impartial way; I learnt that some things are permissible when they appear over one's name, which become tasteless eccentricity or unseemly violence when unsigned."[24] Although his first leader, "Ben Jonson," was published in 1919 – in time for him to include it, after substantial revisions, in *The Sacred Wood* – the major essays on Andrew Marvell, John Dryden, and the metaphysical poets were all written and printed in 1921, that momentous and turbulent year during which both *The Criterion* and *The Waste Land* were in gestation. With his health problems resurfacing and such all-consuming projects underway, it is no surprise that Eliot published less in 1921 than he had since he began reviewing in earnest five years before. Looking back on this time, however, and recalling as well the demise of the *Athenaeum* in the same year, he later wrote: "it seems to me that the period when we had both *The Times Literary Supplement* under Richmond and *The Athenaeum* under Murry . . . was the high summer of literary journalism in London in my lifetime."[25]

* * * *

Richmond always reminded Eliot, when he sent a book for review, that it was merely a "peg" for an article, an opportunity to amplify and extend a central set of concerns and arguments. Taken together, the three *TLS* essays of 1921 demonstrate a remarkable singularity of purpose and method.

Eliot's goal was not simply to resuscitate interest in seventeenth-century poetry; in fact, the metaphysical "revival" had been underway in critical circles well before 1921. And he insisted repeatedly that critical appreciation could not rest solely upon one author's personal preference or what he called "a private whimsical fashion."[26] Nor did he intend merely to offer an *explication de texte*, though his reviews do avoid generalities and impressionist language in favor of close attention to figures of speech, rhetorical contrasts and conceits, and the succession of images portraying dynamic mental processes. The loftier goal that Eliot pursued with such consistency was, rather, to reshape the pantheon of English literature by correcting its lines of genealogy and influence. Despite his own indebtedness to Swinburne and Symons, Arnold and Pater, Eliot grew increasingly certain that the nineteenth century had exerted a pernicious influence on contemporary poetic practice. The rustic, pastoral themes of Wordsworth had become, by the early twentieth century, the parochial, self-satisfied verse of the Georgian poets. The so-called quatrain poems that he and Pound were publishing in 1918 and 1919 had already begun to achieve success in transforming the tendencies of contemporary poets in London. As Richard Aldington, who disliked Eliot's poetry as much as he admired his prose, reported to Amy Lowell in America: "the new development here is getting very 'metaphysical' and incomprehensible. The influence of Eliot has been limited but intense and the movement is entirely in accordance with his philosophical and satirical poetry."[27] His successful transformation of contemporary poetic practices was, however, only the beginning.

In "Tradition and the Individual Talent" and elsewhere, he had emphasized the dynamism and mutability of the tradition, its capacity for change and expansion based upon the introduction of innovative new forces. With the creative "movement" taking hold in London literary circles, Eliot turned to criticism to effect a decisive shift away from the dominance of nineteenth-century literary tastes and criteria. In short, he sought to realign the established critical genealogies that elevated feeling, expression, and magniloquence over metaphysical conceit, satirical wit, and classical restraint. These were the assumptions and conventions that led contemporary critics to prize Wordsworth over Pope, or Milton over Dryden. He intimates the need for this realignment in "Tradition and the Individual Talent," when he proposes briefly that the modern poet "must be very conscious of the main current, which does not at all flow invariably through the most distinguished reputations."[28] As Eliot had begun to conceptualize it, the main

current of English verse ran from the masterful style and "torrential imagination" of Christopher Marlowe ("Shakespeare," he was quick to add, "does not lend himself to these genealogies") to the "shocking and terrifying directness" of Ben Jonson and the devouring sensibility of Donne, and thence to the critical intelligence and wit of poets like Marvell and Dryden.[29]

As he reevaluated poets like Marvell and Dryden, on their own merits and as a part of "the main current" rather than a digression from it, he also took aim at the distinguished reputations of those Romantic and Victorian critics whose work had hindered a just appreciation of them. "To those whose taste in poetry," he writes in "John Dryden," "is formed entirely upon the English poetry of the nineteenth century – to the majority – it is difficult to explain or excuse Dryden."[30] Reevaluating Dryden's achievement, for Eliot, involves revisiting and critiquing the critical distortions handed down by Hazlitt, Pater, and Arnold. "The tastes and fashions" of the nineteenth century, he writes, "had no place for Dryden."[31] After his well-known pronouncements in "The Metaphysical Poets" about the decline of the "mind of England" after the seventeenth century – "a dissociation of sensibility set in, from which we have never recovered" – he returns to the question of genealogies and currents and to the ambitious realignment that was driving his argument, asking: "what would have been the fate of the 'metaphysical' had the current of poetry descended in a direct line from them, as it descended in a direct line to them?"[32] What would have happened, that is, had it not veered toward Romanticism and the literary tastes formed upon the Romantic poetry and criticism? And finally, in "Andrew Marvell," Eliot reflects upon Marvell's superiority to a nineteenth-century poet like William Morris; aligns Marvell's sophistication and surprise, levity and seriousness with Gustave Flaubert; and aims to revive appreciation for the distinctive quality of his verse by suggesting, once again, the need to reverse the drastic and deleterious transformation of sensibility in the nineteenth century. Marvell's best work possessed a quality "absent from the work of Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats, on whose poetry nineteenth-century criticism has unconsciously been based": "it is something precious and needed and apparently extinct."[33]

* * * *

As part of his attempt to document and even reverse this apparent process of extinction, Eliot began to act upon his long-held desire to write

from abroad for an American paper, to contribute regular correspondence on literary life and culture in London and Europe. When his friend from Milton Academy, Scofield Thayer, was in the midst of assuming editorial control of *The Dial* in June 1918, Eliot told him: "I think that if I composed something in the hope of your printing it I ought to exploit my geographical position . . . Studies in European literature, by one on the SPOT! Reflections on American literature, by one NOT on the spot" (*L1* 269). Even before his agreement with Thayer came to fruition, he repeated the idea to Van Wyck Brooks, editor of *The Freeman*: "It's very rare now that I *want* to review any book . . . What I have always wanted to do for some American paper is to write occasional London letters" (*L1* 485-86). Soon after Thayer consolidated his position at the *Dial*, he obtained an agreement from Eliot to contribute a bimonthly letter dealing with "the literary life of the metropolis" or, as Eliot wryly suspected, with "the reasons for there not being more life than there is" (*L1* 509). His first "London Letter" appeared in April 1921, and he contributed seven more over the following year and a half. With their digressions and topicality, these chronicles offer a new and unfamiliar perspective on the crucial months leading up to Eliot's nervous breakdown in September 1921, on the development and publication of *The Waste Land*, and on the founding of the *Criterion*. In contrast to the detached, scholarly character of his *TLS* reviews, the tone of the *Dial* "Letters" is frequently informal, sardonic, and contentious. The first letter upbraids the "two stupidities" that distinguish English and American literary cultures but also condemn them to the same narrow provincialism and intellectual dullness.[34] Eliot critiques "the Established Church of contemporary literature" in America and the bland "Y.M.C.A. morality" of its representatives, and he decries "the General Reading Public" in England, with its "taste for which everything is either too hot or too cold" and its utter lack of critical sense.[35]

In subsequent *Dial* "Letters," Eliot shifts his attention away from the mediocrities of the literary scene and towards the cultural and artistic climate in London more broadly, including ballet, theatre, music hall, and visual arts. He continues to champion the work of the newly formed Phoenix Society, an independent theatre group established in 1919 to produce full, unexpurgated Elizabethan and Restoration plays for a subscription-only audience. He laments the demise of the music-hall and the rise of the musical revue and the "super cinema," both of which were beginning to displace the rousing and ferociously irreverent performances of the music hall

comedians whom he loved. He chronicles the much publicized arrival of Alfred Einstein and his lectures on relativity; the new seasons and dancers of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes; and the Bishop's controversial proposal to demolish nineteen historic churches in the city of London. Throughout the letters, Eliot gives voice to the highs and lows of the city's cultural climate, conveying both his enthusiasm over performances and exhibitions but also "the particular torpor or deadness which strikes a denizen of London": "Other cities decay . . . London merely shrivels, like a little bookkeeper grown old."[36] Taken as a whole, the "London Letters" also constitute a revealing documentary of Eliot's first attempts to establish and shape his new role as a cultural commentator, a public intellectual whose commitment to the cultural vitality of Europe and America compels him to engage with the day-to-day cultural and artistic life of the metropolis.

* * * *

In September 1921 Eliot reached a breaking point in his own day-to-day affairs. For ten weeks he had been living in temporary, cramped quarters at 12 Wigmore Street – Vivien called it "an attic with a glass roof" – so that his mother and older sister, whom he had not seen for six years, could pass their London visit at his usual flat at 9 Clarence Gate Gardens (*L1* 572). Vivien had been in increasingly poor health since February, and her brief return to London during their visit only worsened her condition. Eliot told Sydney Schiff that the summer had left him exhausted and paralyzed. In his "London Letter" from the end of the summer, he candidly reflects: "one knows, oneself, that there are times when it is desirable to be seen and times when it is felicitous to vanish."[37] Less than a month after his family left on 20 August, Eliot suffered a nervous breakdown. Under orders from the "nerve specialist" whom Vivien took him to see, he planned to take three months for complete rest and recuperation, going first to the Albemarle Hotel in the seaside town of Margate, Kent, where he began to work in earnest on the poem that would become *The Waste Land*. After a short return to London, he and Vivien sailed for Paris; Eliot continued from there to Lausanne, Switzerland, where he stayed at the Hotel St. Luce and placed himself in the care of Swiss psychiatrist Dr. Roger Vittoz. When he rejoined Vivien in Paris early in January 1922, he brought with him a typescript of *The Waste Land*, which he famously left with Pound to cut and revise. Negotiations over where the poem would be first published began almost as soon as he returned to London, and Eliot divided his attention

between revising the unwieldy typescript, arranging for the launch of the *Criterion*, and setting to work on a new set of international chronicles.

* * * *

The venue for Eliot's new series of essays was the prominent and highly influential French monthly, the *Nouvelle Revue française*. He had sought out Jacques Rivière, then a subeditor of the popular journal, when he was in Paris over a decade before. Now, at the prompting of Lytton Strachey and as part of his own overall plan for reinvigorating the critical reputation of the paper, Rivière reached out to Eliot in the hopes of receiving from him a regular "Lettre d'Angleterre," an ongoing correspondence from abroad that would prove to French readers that English literature had indeed continued after Matthew Arnold and was flourishing still. On his way through Paris in January 1922, Eliot met with Rivière personally and confirmed his willingness to take on the task. He composed the essays in English and sent them to Rivière, who then commissioned their translation into French. The delays of international mail and the unrelenting pace of publishing deadlines evidently prevented Eliot from being able to review proofs before publication. Soon after he received the first "Lettre" in the issue of May 1922, he wrote to commend his translator, Charles du Bos: "it is not simply that you have been faithful to the sense," but "the article is actually *better written* than it was in English" (*L1* 668). Eliot published six articles over the course of his six-year engagement with the *Nouvelle Revue française*. Of the five that appear in the present volume, three were letters and two were essays invited for special issues: "Rencontre" for a 1925 issue in homage to Rivière, who had died of typhoid fever, and "Note sur Mallarmé et Poe" for a special issue on Mallarmé in 1926. Despite the fact that the *Nouvelle Revue française* fiercely opposed the nationalist and right-wing politics of the *Action Français* and Charles Maurras, whom Eliot regarded sympathetically, the journal's commitment to internationalism and classicism earned his admiration and respect. Compared to his *Dial* correspondence, his letters for the *Nouvelle Revue française* are well organized and deftly argued. His first letter makes wide-ranging and polemical claims about the degenerative state of Anglo-American literature after Oscar Wilde and Walter Pater. His second, printed in December 1922, traces the development of English prose, as it suffers the disequilibrium and emotional "fevers" of Ruskin and Carlyle and recovers in the masterful style of *Ulysses*, which he calls a "gigantesque aboutissement" or "gigantic culmination" of an epoch

at its end.[38] And in the third "Lettre d'Angleterre," Eliot boldly predicts the enduring significance of three of his own most lasting influences, Henry James, Sir James Frazer, and F. H. Bradley, all of whom offer lessons not only in sensibility and intellect but in what he calls "la souffrance de la vie de l'esprit," "the agony of spiritual life."[39]

The *Nouvelle Revue française* letters gained Eliot new renown not only in France but in America as well, where they reached the desk of Edmund Wilson at the editorial offices of *Vanity Fair*. Wilson had appealed to Eliot for a critical contribution just after his appointment as editor of *Vanity Fair* in July 1922. He was already an admirer of Eliot's work, and for a time, Pound sought to arrange for the American appearance of *The Waste Land* with him. Though *Vanity Fair* did not publish the poem, by the end of the year Wilson was championing it in *Commerce* and the *Dial*, calling it a triumph of the modern poetic mind and a statement of "the starvation of a whole civilization."[40] He had not yet received the original contribution that Eliot promised when he read the second "Lettre d'Angleterre" and took the opportunity to contact Eliot again, writing in February 1923: "I have just seen your thing on English prose in the *Nouvelle Revue Française* and I wish you could let us reprint it in *Vanity Fair* . . . I think it is so admirable that it would be a great pity for it not to appear in English" (*L1* 723, n. 2). With Jacques Rivère's permission to publish an English translation, Eliot returned to the essay he had written months before and revised his original English typescript, removing appeals to his French audience and refining his argument. His first *Vanity Fair* essay, "Contemporary English Prose," appeared in July 1923. Just a month before, Wilson had devoted a full page to reprinting three of Eliot's earlier poems, which were offered as "keys" to deciphering the difficult and controversial *The Waste Land*. In August, the informal publicity campaign continued, with Wilson printing Clive Bell's admiring review under the tantalizing title, "The Elusive Art of T. S. Eliot: An Enquiry into the Artistic Principles of the Most Disputed of Living American Poets."[41] When Wilson's brief tenure as editor came to an end, his replacement, Frank Crowninshield, immediately recognized the value and appeal of Eliot's contributions and reached out to him to ensure that they continued. Over the coming months, *Vanity Fair* published two more English versions of his *Nouvelle Revue française* letters. Ultimately, Eliot's London chronicles – in the *Dial*, in the *Nouvelle Revue française*, and in *Vanity Fair* – stand in testimony not only to his longtime

dedication to cosmopolitanism in aesthetic and intellectual matters but also to his increasing prominence as a poet and critic of international stature, a prominence aided in no small part by the success of his fledgling editorial venture, *The Criterion*.

* * * *

The model for *The Criterion* was a short-lived but influential quarterly edited by Frank Rutter and Herbert Read called *Art & Letters*, which impressed Eliot with its intellectual scope and its devotion to critical seriousness. Eliot published four significant essays and two poems in its pages, frequently encouraging friends to do so as well. When *Art & Letters* folded in 1920, he immediately began to search for something to take its place, which he considered unique in London literary culture. At the home of Sidney Schiff, who had subsidized *Art & Letters*, Eliot met Lady Lilian Rothermere, estranged wife of wealthy newspaper owner Harold Harmsworth. And with the help of Scofield Thayer, he approached Rothermere in the summer of 1921 about funding an international journal to comprise the *Dial* in America and a new London quarterly that would "revive," under a new title, the defunct *Art & Letters*. Rothermere discountenanced this ambitious international venture – she was reportedly reluctant "to spill her cash for the cause of Literature" – but she agreed to support a more modest quarterly based solely in London with Eliot in the role of sole responsible Editor (*L1* 571).

In the spring of 1922, Eliot began to call on friends and acquaintances to help him assemble the first issue, reaching out to members of his own circle (including Richard Aldington and Herbert Read), representatives of the previous generation (such as J. M. Robertson and George Saintsbury), and literary contacts in Europe (including Valery Larbaud and Herman Hesse). He eagerly sought out translators and contributors from Germany, France, and Spain; he settled on rates of payment for contributors and prices for subscribers; and he designed the quarterly's layout and appearance with printer Richard Cobden-Sanderson. Contrary to convention, Eliot decided not to include an editorial statement of purpose in the first issue. He would adopt a "protective colour" for a time, he wrote to Pound: "What do you think of 'The Possum' for a title?" (*L1* 708).

Eliot brought the first issue of the *Criterion* to press in October 1922. It contained, of course, his own hotly anticipated poem, *The Waste Land*, and it concluded with part of a celebrated lecture on *Ulysses* by Valery Larbaud,

which Eliot himself translated at the last minute. Despite criticism from the unpredictable Lady Rothermere, who detested its appearance and thought the articles dull, he proudly reported on 12 November that the first number had sold out. His first prose contribution to the *Criterion* came in the second issue with "In Memoriam: Marie Lloyd," an analytical tribute to the music hall performer whose death, he proposes, was "a significant moment in English history."[42] In the third issue, alongside original essays by Julien Benda, Virginia Woolf, and Paul Valéry, he continues in this vein by offering homage to the French actress Sarah Bernhardt, whose death had confirmed for him the unbridgeable gulf between the genius of "the traditional French theatre" and the "chaos of the modern stage," which had abandoned its ritual origins in search of realism. In a claim that both recapitulates the anthropological elements of *The Waste Land* and anticipates the avant-garde ritual techniques of *Sweeney Agonistes*, Eliot writes: "the failure of the contemporary stage to satisfy the craving for ritual is one of the reasons why it is not a living art."[43]

* * * *

The foremost challenger to the *Criterion* was founded some eight months after its first issue by Eliot's personal friend, intellectual antagonist, and former editor at the *Athenaeum*, John Middleton Murry. In contrast to the *Criterion*, the first issue of Murry's *Adelphi* featured an extensive editorial manifesto. In it, Murry confesses his personal fears, relates his faith and inner struggles, and heralds the new magazine's unifying spirit, arising in response to the recent death of his wife, Katherine Mansfield: an unembarrassed devotion to the principle of life and all that is life-giving. Murry's manifesto spurred Eliot to shed the *Criterion*'s protective skin and issue one of his first editorial statements in July 1923 under the title "The Function of a Literary Review." There, he asserts the need for the autonomy and specialization of literary criticism, declaring: "the pursuit of literary perfection, and the preoccupation with literature and art for their own sake, are objects of attack, no longer in the name of 'morals,' but in the name of a much more insidious catchword: 'life.'"[44] Returning to his earlier emphasis on the discipline of the critical mind, he foretells the intellectual chaos and confusion that will arise if intellectuals cannot "maintain the autonomy, the disinterestedness, of every human activity." Though neither Eliot nor Murry had mentioned the other by name, it soon became clear that an intense and ultimately unresolvable debate was underway, one that would reveal the

profound ideological gulf that divided them, despite their enduring friendship.

The unanticipated commercial success of the *Adelphi* (the first issue went through three printings and sold over 15,000 copies) made it a conspicuous target, and Murry drew particular criticism from *The New Statesman*, where the literary editor Raymond Mortimer labeled the new paper the last stand of romanticism.[45] Murry and Eliot both ultimately questioned the value and usefulness of the terms "romanticism" and "classicism," which had come into use again in France in the early twentieth century, and which Eliot likely encountered in Irving Babbitt's class at Harvard and in the work of T. E. Hulme. But Murry accepted the terms for the sake of argument, declaring in "On Fear; and On Romanticism" (1923): "when a classicist comes along who knows as much about his own creed as I know about mine – then we may prepare for battle."[46] Eliot answered the challenge. In "The Function of Criticism" (1923), he disagrees with Murry explicitly and definitively, arguing not for a middle ground but for a clearer, more absolute statement of the principles that divide them: "what Mr. Murry does show," he writes, "is that there are at least two attitudes toward literature and toward everything, and that you cannot hold both."[47]

The argument, as Eliot characterizes it in subsequent essays, hinged upon the question of how to discern the source of intellectual and spiritual authority. The romantic finds an indubitable truth and authority within himself; the classicist, in an institution or set of ideas outside of himself. The difference, Eliot writes, is ultimately between those who "make *man the measure of all things*, and those who would find an extra-human measure."[48] Eliot personally invited Murry to continue his defense of romanticism in the *Criterion*, and he used the recently inaugurated editorial "commentary" at the beginning of the April 1924 issue to publicize T. E. Hulme's newly published *Speculations*, declaring Hulme the forerunner of "the twentieth-century mind."[49] The fierce exchange continued in both journals and beyond, so that by the time Eliot launched *The New Criterion* in January 1926, he felt obliged to offer not only an editorial manifesto but a list of works by authors – including Georges Sorel, Charles Maurras, Julien Benda, T. E. Hulme, Irving Babbitt, and Jacques Maritain – whom he considered exemplary of the classicist tendency that he espoused. Though he refrained from naming the *Adelphi*, he characterized several of its intellectual luminaries as devoted not to "life" but to "that part of the present which is already dead."[50] Despite the vehemence of the public debate,

however, he and Murry seem to have grown closer personally during this time than they had ever been, with Eliot repeatedly reaching out to him for support and advice about his private struggles: "You are in some sort of purgatory, I am perhaps thoroughly damned. But that's one reason why I want to see you. And I always feel with you 'mon semblable – mon frère.' Neither your friends nor mine could understand this" (*L3* 68). Even as he attacked Murry's work, Eliot made certain to keep their friendship distinct: "If it offends you, tell me so at once," he wrote in 1927: "it is not meant to be at all personal. But I find that most people do not separate their opinions and their personal friendships as clearly as I do, and I have given offence in the past" (*L3* 435).

Their skillfully managed public controversy continued into 1927, but its final appearance in this volume occurs in "Mr. Read and M. Fernandez," in which Eliot takes issue with Murry's front-page *TLS* review of *Reason and Romanticism* by the regular *Criterion* contributor, Herbert Read. There, drawing on the work of Thomas Aquinas and Aristotelian commentator Giacomo Zabarella, Eliot again dismisses the romantics' inward, subjective criteria for value – calling the inner voice merely a "potent and thuriferous ju-ju" – and declares the ultimate and comprehensive value of "the conception of Intelligence."[51]

* * * *

Though it did not appear until October 1924, *Homage to John Dryden: Three Essays on Poetry of the Seventeenth Century* bears witness to the foundational and lasting importance of Eliot's front-page *TLS* essays and to the authoritative critical value that they continued to accrue in the time since their composition three years earlier. Published by Virginia and Leonard Woolf as the fourth of the Hogarth Essays series, Eliot's second prose volume collects three of the four leaders from his earliest work for the *TLS*. Virginia Woolf began petitioning him early in 1924 for a contribution to the Hogarth Press's first series, which aimed to offer attractive and affordable pamphlets, consistent in their size and design style, by up-and-coming authors. Eliot's contribution to the series was preceded by Woolf's own *Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown* (which appeared in the *Criterion* under a different title in July 1924) as well as by the work of Roger Fry and Theodora Bosanquet. After months of delay, Eliot wrote to Woolf to bring the plans back to the fore on 27 August: "When do you want to publish my defective compositions?" He admitted that the essays now seemed unsatisfactory to

him, joking with Woolf about the popular perception of his more recent shift in interests toward politics and religion: "These three essays are not very good . . . but I cannot offer you my 'Reactionary's Encheiridion' or my 'By Sleeping-Car to Rome: A Note on Church Reunion' because they will not be ready in time" (*L2* 483-84). Woolf responded that he should send the essays in haste, "as soon as you have done your preface," and concluded by offering high praise for *The Sacred Wood* and a frank confession: "I admire your work too much."[52] Eliot set to work on the preface, in which he remarks more seriously upon his shift in critical perspective since 1921. The more ambitious series that he had envisioned – of which the present essays were to form but a part – had become "the forbidden fruit of impossible leisure": "I have abandoned this design in the pursuit of other policies."[53] Such a project demanded a much broader scope, and he no longer wanted to approach matters of culture or politics, education or theology, solely through the lens of literary history. The precise shape of an alternative, precisely what "other policies" he envisioned, had not yet become clear. Eliot's personal copies of the book, handsomely bound with a bold cover design by Vanessa Bell, arrived at his flat on 12 November. "The book gives me great pleasure," he told Woolf, "if I do not read it" (*L2* 537).

Homage to John Dryden was received with lukewarm appreciation in the printed reviews. The usually supportive Edmund Wilson questioned Eliot's valuation of Dryden; Edwin Muir criticized his exasperation with Milton.[54] But in other circles, the essays penetrated more deeply and were more influential than anything Eliot had yet written. Richard Aldington had once counseled Pound to "leave the polemics to Tom Eliot, who has a genius for it."[55] *Homage to John Dryden* had the effect, in fact, of transforming Eliot's growing reputation for polemic into a new and commanding authority at Cambridge and other bastions of critical taste. Readers familiar with him only as the controversial author of *The Waste Land* now began to recognize Eliot as serious literary critic, and they returned to his earlier prose with renewed interest and respect. I. A. Richards, a lecturer for the new Cambridge School of English, hoped to lure him from Lloyds Bank to teach at Cambridge. And F. R. Leavis, who was finishing his doctorate there at the time, later recalled:

> *The Sacred Wood* . . . had very little influence or attention before the Hogarth Press brought out *Homage to John Dryden* . . . It was with the publication in this form of those essays (the Hogarth Press had recently

published *The Waste Land*) that Eliot became the important contemporary critic. It was the impact of this slender new collection that sent one back to *The Sacred Wood* and confirmed with decisive practical effect one's sense of the stimulus to be got from that rare thing, a fine intelligence in literary criticism."[56]

* * * *

Eliot left Lloyds Bank in 1925 and accepted a position on the Editorial Board of the publishing firm of Faber & Gwyer. The transition came at just the time that Lady Rothermere's three-year publishing contract with the *Criterion* was set to expire. After lengthy negotiations – over changing the title, altering its appearance, rethinking the production and distribution models – Faber & Gwyer agreed to assume joint responsibility for the journal, now retitled *The New Criterion*, and to sponsor Eliot as editor. The first issue went to press in January 1926. At nearly twice the length of its predecessor, it began with a brief, incisive editorial in which Eliot offers his vision of "the task to be attempted, and the place which may be occupied, by any literary review."[57] By the time *The New Criterion* was on the shelves, however, its editor was preparing to go to Cambridge to bring another all-consuming project to realization.

His ongoing debates with Eliot did not prevent John Middleton Murry from recommending him, the year before, for what would become his most sustained work of intellectual criticism to date: the Clark lectures at Trinity College, Cambridge. After giving the lectures himself on Keats and Shakespeare in 1924-25, Murry nominated Eliot to succeed him in the prestigious lectureship. By then, Eliot's name had already become known at Cambridge, for better and for worse. I. A. Richards had invited him several times to lecture and attend his protocols. And Richards brought Eliot's work to the attention of E. M. W. Tillyard, Secretary of the Faculty Board of English, who was impressed with *The Sacred Wood* and *Homage to John Dryden* and who wrote of Eliot: "he was the man really responsible for introducing into Cambridge a set of ideas that both shocked and satisfied. I cannot think of anyone else who counted in this way. . . . Eliot's unconventional ideas irritated or delighted in the right way. They were fresh and stirred people up and some of the people who were stirred up looked a bit more closely."[58] So, as extraordinary as it seemed for a thirty-six-year-old American with no ties to the university and relatively few publications to

his name, Eliot was approved as lecturer on 6 March 1925 and set about preparing the eight lectures, which would commence the following January. From the beginning, he conceived of them as an opportunity to explain and expand upon his long-held fascination with the connections between the philosophical poetry of Dante and the metaphysical poetry of Donne and his school. Developing a concentrated argument – one that drew upon his love of Dante, his expertise in metaphysical poetry, and his intensifying interest in Thomism and medieval theology – presented him with yet another chance to write the book that he had abandoned several times already. By October 1925, however, with less than three months before the lectures were scheduled to begin, Eliot still had not managed to assemble an outline. A painful and unexpected operation on his jaw, Vivien's renewed illnesses, and negotiations over the uncertain future of the *Criterion* all intervened and made it impossible for him to bring the massive project to the starting blocks.

In November, with Vivien in the country and his new work at Faber & Gwyer not yet fully underway, Eliot sailed to the Alpes-Maritimes in the south of France with a few books and notes and settled into work on the lectures at Lady Rotheremere's lodgings in La Turbie. He relied heavily upon memory and upon the generous services of the London Library, to which he sent requests for the books and editions that he needed. His argument began to take shape in opposition to a book titled *Les Doctrines médiévales chez Donne* (1917), in which Mary Paton Ramsay argues that Donne possessed an essentially medieval mind. Eliot sensed, instead, a profound disconnection between the mind of the Middle Ages, which seemed to exhibit such clarity, order, and emotional discipline, and the mind of Donne's time, which now seemed to him so full of intellectual confusion and emotional indulgence. In short, as he would make abundantly clear in the lectures, Eliot grew increasingly convinced that Donne and the poets of the seventeenth century in England constituted a romanticism before the Romantics, a widespread and unmistakable decline from the classical order and organization of Dante, the Provençal troubadour poets, and the systematic medieval theology that had fostered the courtly love poetry of fourteenth-century Florence. This line of thinking received further confirmation with the unexpected arrival of a new book for review from the *TLS*, Mario Praz's *Secentismo e marinismo in Inghilterra* (1926). Praz's emphasis on the contrast between the poetry of Donne and that of Guido Cavalcanti; his insistence on the essential role played by the Jesuits in

seventeenth-century thought; and his masterful use of primary source evidence from the era; all of these factors brought Eliot's simmering lectures to a boil. By December, their shape and direction had become clear: the lectures would trace the dramatic arc of a mental disintegration that afflicted European literature, from the unified sensibility of Dante and his contemporaries to the dissociation of thought and feeling that pervades the work of the seventeenth-century metaphysical poets in England. He would attempt, he told Herbert Read on 11 December, "to criticise the poetry of the XVII century from the point of view of the XIII" (*L2* 798).

Eliot gave his first lecture on Tuesday, 26 January 1926, to a packed house of professors and students in the great hall of Trinity College. He delivered one lecture each Tuesday for six weeks thereafter, with two scheduled during the penultimate week. Reports of his success as a lecturer vary depending on the observer. One Cambridge don murmured that Eliot had "thrown intellect to the winds; given up the ghost."[59] Another attendant referred to him whimsically as the serpent in Cambridge's Eden.[60] Still another grumbled about the cold room, and about the way that Eliot had chanted long passages of medieval Latin. On the day following each Tuesday lecture, he met with students for a morning coffee-circle discussion, where he impressed a number of future well-known critics and scholars. Though he did not attend the lectures themselves, William Empson marveled at Eliot's seriousness, attentiveness, and intellectual range during the morning meetings.[61] Here Eliot also met John Hayward, an Exhibitioner at King's College and editor of a recent edition of Rochester's *Works*. In the years to come, Hayward became a close friend and trusted collaborator.

Eliot had hoped, once the lectures had come to an end, to revise and rearrange them into a book to be titled "The School of Donne"; he even envisioned two companion volumes – "Elizabethan Drama" and "The Sons of Ben" – that would join the first under the general title, "The Disintegration of the Intellect." He was nominated for a prestigious Research Fellowship at All Souls College in Oxford, which would have given him the time and freedom to reshape and expand the lectures into the long-awaited study, but the committee declined to elect him on the basis of his controversial poems. The loss of the Fellowship stunted his momentum; though he sent the typed manuscript to Herbert Read and Mario Praz for comments and suggestions, he became increasingly conscious of the time, energy, and effort that such a project would demand. Though he was understandably slow to surrender them, his plans for this mammoth, tripartite study of

literary history were eventually abandoned, and new projects with strikingly different scopes, including "The Outline of Royalism" and "The Principles of Modern Heresy," began to take their place.

* * * *

The final year of prose included in this volume, 1926, was Eliot's most prolific since the first, a fact all the more surprising in light of the mounting turmoil that he faced in his personal and spiritual life at the time. Even before the Clark lectures were over, Eliot had immersed himself in the demands of his new editorial position at Faber & Gwyer, corresponding with new authors and developing new series, including the "Poets on the Poets" series in which his own *Dante* (1929) later appeared. His creative life, meanwhile, was entering yet another period of anxious inactivity. At the end of 1925, Faber had published his *Poems, 1909-1925*, which included all five sections of his most recent work, "The Hollow Men." But Eliot already regarded the volume as an attempt to "wind up and liquidate this phase and start afresh"; he told Leonard Woolf, "the book gives me no pleasure" (*L2* 802). And although the first of two fragments of his projected Aristophanic melodrama appeared later in the year, the verse play that eventually became *Sweeney Agonistes* had, in fact, come to a standstill.

In March, he and Vivien uprooted their lives once again, this time to move from the flat at 9 Clarence Gate Gardens to a small house at 57 Chester Terrace. The next month, they travelled to Paris to stay with Henry Eliot and his new wife, and then continued with them to Rome, where they met up with Vivien's brother and were visited by Ezra Pound. It was in Rome that Eliot shocked his relatives, as his brother's new wife later recalled, by kneeling before Michelangelo's *Pietà* in St. Peter's Basilica. After Rome, he took Vivien to Freiburg, Germany to see a new doctor, passing a disastrous ten-day visit that left her delusional and in severe mental distress. She attempted suicide upon returning to Paris in May and was admitted to the Sanatorium de la Malmaison, where TSE visited her regularly – traveling back and forth between London and Paris nearly every two weeks – until the two finally left together in August, only to learn that his older sister, Charlotte, had died of peritonitis. "I am oppressed by a sense of doom," he wrote despondently to John Middleton Murry in August 1926 (*L3* 243).

Despite these unexpected and bitterly painful developments in his personal life, Eliot found the momentum of the Clark lectures intellectually fortifying, and he launched back into regular reviewing for the *TLS*. In his

work there and in the *Criterion*, he took the opportunity to write about material that allowed him to draw upon and expand ideas from the Clark lectures. In the penultimate lecture, for instance, he had reflected on John Davies as a meditative precursor to metaphysical poetry; several months later, in a *TLS* essay commissioned for the 300th anniversary of Davies's death, Eliot enlarges upon his "mastery of workmanship," applauds his "capacity for belief" (which he believes to exceed Donne's), and even compares his philosophical poem, *Nosce Teipsum*, to passages from Dante's *Purgatorio*.[62] He had quoted from Chaucer's *Troilus* at the end of the eighth Clark lecture, and later in 1926, in a review of R. K. Root's new edition of the poem, he declares the value of its "fixed and firm moral order" and argues emphatically for its kinship with Dante's *Vita Nuova*, which held such a central place in the lectures: in their treatments of human and divine love and in their reliance upon an established spiritual community, "the two are perfectly consistent."[63] In November he was invited to contribute to a special issue of the *Nouvelle Revue française* in tribute to Stéphane Mallarmé; his essay, "Note sur Mallarmé et Poe," is effectively an addendum to his final Clark lecture, in which he addresses Jules Laforgue and Tristan Corbière in the attempt to identify "the real metaphysical poetry of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries."[64]

Perhaps his most significant and pivotal essay of the year, however, was "Lancelot Andrewes," written for Bruce Richmond and printed in the *TLS* on the tercentenary of Andrewes's death. As he later recalled, the origin of the essay was, in fact, not Eliot's growing desire to write publicly about theology but rather "a chance remark in conversation" that revealed to Richmond "that I was an ardent admirer of Bishop Lancelot Andrewes . . . I was at once commissioned to write the leader."[65] The chance remark, however, produced deliberate and far-reaching consequences; Eliot himself sensed the essay's significance in the shifting landscape of his critical and spiritual life. He wrote to Richmond in July: "this article will be a pretty serious matter for me as I shall have to clear up my mind and try to come to conclusions, in connection with Bishop Andrewes, affecting my whole position" (*L3* 209). In the essay, Eliot emphasizes not only Andrewes's mastery of English prose but also his spiritual discipline and emotional control, which granted him that "harmony" of "intellect and sensibility" so conspicuously lacking in Donne and later religious writers.[66] He focuses also upon Andrewes's consummately important place in the tradition of the Anglican Church, the communion to which Eliot himself was privately being drawn,

calling him "the first great preacher of the English Catholic Church."[67] And in perhaps his most personally revealing observation, he reflects upon the process whereby Andrewes's method leads the mind slowly toward a divine goal: "It is only when we have saturated ourselves in his prose, followed the movement of his thought, that we find his examination of words terminating in the ecstasy of assent."[68]

* * * *

Late in 1926, not long after reaching the significant personal and professional conclusions that made it possible for him to finish "Lancelot Andrewes," Eliot renewed correspondence with William Force Stead, Chaplain to Worcester College, Oxford, whom he had met through Richard Cobden-Sanderson three years before. Shortly thereafter, Eliot sought Stead's assistance in being confirmed into the Church of England. And he pushed forward with his plans to become a naturalized British subject. In the midst of such momentous changes and upheavals, Eliot increasingly sensed the need to regard his prose work from the past decade in a new light, to gauge the value of the critical program he had set forth in essays like "The Perfect Critic," both as an end in itself and as a stage in the development of his own sensibility. In the years since its first appearance, *The Sacred Wood* had come to represent an authoritative critical achievement. Its author was now even granting requests to translate excerpts from it into Urdu and Yiddish. But when Eliot sat down in January 1928 to revise the text of *The Sacred Wood* for a second edition, as he had long hoped to do, he discovered that he was "too far out of touch with it": "I do not think that I wish to make any revision to the body of the book," he informed his publisher (*L4* 20). He thought it essential, however, to compose a new preface to the book. And when he began to draft the preface (now as a naturalized British citizen and a member of the Anglican communion), when he reread the essays that had already exerted such tremendous influence, he was reminded of just how far he had come since they first appeared. With all of the elements of his early critical program seemingly in place, and faced with the opportunity to reaffirm his ideals of perfection in criticism, he instead declared that an era had ended, that he had "passed on" to another set of problems, expanding his concerns beyond literary criticism alone and toward "the relation of poetry to the spiritual and social life of its time and of other times."[69] With this discovery came also the recognition that in this end was, in fact, a kind of beginning, one that he neither rejected

nor repudiated but came to regard soberly as "an introduction to a larger and more difficult subject": "The best that we can hope to do," he concludes, "is to agree upon a point from which to start."[70]

NOTES

1. "The Perfect Critic" (269).

2. Qtd. in Michael Holroyd, *Lytton Strachey: A Critical Biography*, vol 2 (London: Heinemann, 1968), 351.

3. Clive Bell, *Old Friends: Personal Recollections* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1956), 121-24.

4. "Foreword," *Katherine Mansfield and Other Literary Studies*, by John Middleton Murry (London: Constable, 1959), viii.

5. "Foreword," *Katherine Mansfield and Other Literary Studies*, ix.

6. Robert Nichols, "An Ironist," *The Observer* (18 Apr 1920), 7.

7. "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (106, 109).

8. "Hamlet" (125, 124).

9. "The Preacher as Artist" (168).

10. "Christopher Marlowe" (97).

11. "Criticism in England" (54-55).

12. "Modern Tendencies in Poetry" (220).

13. "The Perfect Critic" (262).

14. "The Perfect Critic" (269).

15. "Ben Jonson" (150).

16. "Hamlet" (122).

17. "Dante" (232).

18. Robert Lynd, "Buried Alive," *Contemporary Reviews*, 57; Conrad Aiken, "The Scientific Critic," *Contemporary Reviews*, 64; Robert McAlmon, "Modern Artiques," *Contact*, 2 (Jan 1921), unpaginated.

19. E. M. W. Tillyard, *The Muse Unchained: An Intimate Account of the Revolution in English Studies at Cambridge* (London: Bowes & Bowes, 1958), 97-98.

20. *Richard Aldington: An Autobiography in Letters*, ed. Norman T. Gates (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State UP, 1992), 69-70.

21. F. R. Leavis, *The Common Pursuit* (New York: New York UP, 1964), 280.

22. *Richard Aldington: An Autobiography in Letters*, 51.

23. "Bruce Lyttelton Richmond," *TLS* (13 Jan 1961), 17.

24. "Bruce Lyttelton Richmond," 17.

25. "Foreword," *Katherine Mansfield and Other Literary Studies*, ix.

26. "John Dryden" (350).

27. *Richard Aldington: An Autobiography in Letters*, 67.

28. "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (107).

29. "torrential imagination": "Christopher Marlowe" (98); "Shakespeare does not lend himself": "Andrew Marvell" (309); "shocking and terrifying directness": "Ben Jonson" (156).

30. "John Dryden" (350).

31. "John Dryden" (350).

32. "The Metaphysical Poets" (380-81).

33. "Andrew Marvell" (319-20).

34. "London Letter: March, 1921" (333).

35. "London Letter: March, 1921" (334-36).

36. "London Letter: April, 1922" (394).

37. "London Letter: September, 1921" (369).

38. "Lettre d'Angleterre: Le style dans la prose anglaise contemporaine" (426); "Contemporary English Prose" (450).

39. "Lettre d'Angleterre" (494); "A Prediction in Regard to Three English Authors" (517).

40. Edmund Wilson, "The Poetry of Drouth," *Contemporary Reviews*, 86.

41. *Vanity Fair* (Sept 1923), 53, 110.

42. "Marie Lloyd" (419).

43. "Dramatis Personae" (433-35).

44. "The Function of a Literary Review" (446).

45. Raymond Mortimer, "New Novels," *New Statesman* 21 July 1923, 448.

46. "On Fear; and On Romanticism," *Adelphi*, 1 (Sept 1923), 277.

47. "The Function of Criticism" (460).

48. "Mr. Read and M. Fernandez" (838).

49. "A Commentary" (Apr 1924) (521).

50. "The Idea of a Literary Review" (765).

51. "Mr. Read and M. Fernandez" (840, 839).

52. Letter to Eliot, 3 Sept 1924. *The Letters of Virginia Woolf: Volume Three, 1923-1928*, ed. Nigel Nicolson and Joanne Trautmann (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1976), 129.

53. "Preface" to *Homage to John Dryden* (546).

54. Edmund Wilson, "T. S. Eliot and the Seventeenth Century," *Contemporary Reviews*, 123-24; Edwin Muir, "Mr. Eliot's Criticism," *Contemporary Reviews*, 124-26.

55. *Richard Aldington: An Autobiography in Letters*, 80-81.

56. F. R. Leavis, *Anna Karenina and Other Essays* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1967), 177-78.

57. "The Idea of a Literary Review" (762).

58. Tillyard, *The Muse Unchained*, 98.

59. Virginia Woolf recounts these remarks by scholar and novelist F. L. Lucas in her diary entry for 3 Mar 1926. *The Diary of Virginia Woolf, Vol 3: 1925-1930*, ed. Anne Olivier Bell and Andrew McNeillie (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1980), 65.

60. Basil Willey, *Cambridge and Other Memories, 1920-1953* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968), 25.

61. George Watson, "The Cambridge Lectures of T. S. Eliot," *The Sewanee Review*, 99 (Fall 1991), 579.

62. "Sir John Davies" (862, 864).

63. "Chaucer's 'Troilus'" (809).

64. Clark Lecture VIII (743).

65. "Bruce Lyttelton Richmond," *TLS* (13 Jan 1961), 17.

66. "Lancelot Andrewes" (820).

67. "Lancelot Andrewes" (819).

68. "Lancelot Andrewes" (822).

69. "Preface to the 1928 Edition," *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism* (London: Methuen, 1928), viii.

70. "Preface to the 1928 Edition," viii.

This page intentionally left blank

EDITORIAL PROCEDURES AND PRINCIPLES

I. PUBLISHED PROSE

Criteria for Inclusion

Eliot's uncollected prose makes up the vast majority of the writings published in his lifetime and spans the period from his stories in the *Smith Academy Record* in 1905 to his final autobiographical note for the *Harvard College Class of 1910: Fifty-fifth Anniversary Report*, contributed in late December 1964, shortly before his death on 4 January 1965. These writings include hundreds of reviews and essays contributed to periodicals; commentaries in the *Criterion*; letters to the press (printed here and in the *Letters*; in each place they appear in different contexts of personal letters and public prose, thereby inviting separate readings and annotation); lectures and addresses published separately in wrappers or in boards; introductions, prefaces, and forewords to books and to translations of his works in foreign languages; testimonials and other contributions to domestic and foreign newspapers; and public broadcasts published or excerpted in the *Listener*. Among his own letters to the press are those of which he was a signatory with one or more others. As his role in their authorship is uncertain, these signed letters, which began in 1927 and increased in number in later decades, will be included in a separate section, "Letters and Documents with Multiple Authorship."

Chronology

With a few exceptions, the editors have arranged the majority of Eliot's unpublished and published prose writings in the original order of composition or publication to allow the reader to follow closely his developing patterns of thought as he immersed himself in intellectual journalism and literary criticism from year to year, decade to decade. The primary volumes of collected essays, together with their prefaces and introductions, have been disassembled and their contents returned to chronological order alongside the uncollected and unpublished prose.

Less than 10 percent of Eliot's prose writings underwent textual changes when they were reprinted or collected; most pieces were never revisited after their first publication in periodical and other forms. Some reviews and essays, however, particularly those included in *The Sacred Wood*, were

combined and revised by Eliot as new essays: successively published reviews of books on Ben Jonson in November 1919, on Philip Massinger in May-June 1920, and on Swinburne and others in the two-part "The Perfect Critic" in July 1920. The original reviews were redacted as such and included in the volume under the first title of each pair. He collapsed three other reviews published between September and December 1919 under the title "Imperfect Critics" for the volume. Moreover, "Eeldrop and Appleplex" and "Tradition and the Individual Talent," originally published in two separate parts months apart, have been combined into a single piece. In such uncharacteristic cases, we have sacrificed adherence to chronology in order to present the complete texts, but not without indicating the separate chronological positions and titles and recording significant textual changes.

A few other considerations have led us to relax the chronological order of publication in specific instances, including Eliot's doctoral dissertation on F. H. Bradley, a draft of which was completed and approved in 1916 but not edited and published until 1964. The editors have placed this lengthy work neither intrusively into the published reviews of 1916, nor awkwardly out of context in 1964, but logically at the end of the graduate essays of 1913-15, essays that led to and were organically drawn upon for the dissertation. In presenting a corrected, re-edited, and more readable critical text in that position, the editors have drawn upon the original dissertation typescript, the proofs and correspondence of the suppressed first printing (1963), and the proofs and text of the 1964 edition.

The three volumes of university lectures described above – *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*, *After Strange Gods, The Idea of a Christian Society* – as well as *Notes towards the Definition of Culture*, have been kept intact and edited as the coherent, self-contained works that they were intended to be; however, when individual lectures were published separately, the publication data and any alterations are recorded in the textual notes. The Clark Lectures (1926) and Turnbull Lectures (1933), edited and published together posthumously as *The Varieties of Metaphysical Poetry* (1993), have also been kept intact, each re-edited and included separately and chronologically in respective volumes. The dates of composition of individual reviews, essays, and lectures are given when they are known.

Standardization of Formats

Eliot's prose in little magazines and periodicals appears under a variety of house styles: the divergent formats, typography, spacing, and indents for

paragraphs and set-off quotations have all been standardized. As the bibliographical descriptions and kinds of information provided for books under review also varied considerably from periodical to periodical, these descriptions have been standardized in the heading, as have the descriptions and dates of the periodicals in which the reviews first appeared. Unsigned reviews and essays are indicated as such in the heading or in an initial note; all opening and closing signatures – signed or initialed – and pseudonyms are placed at the right margin at the end of the text.

Titles

Before 1919, many of Eliot's reviews were untitled; thereafter, most were titled unless they appeared as part of a "Commentary" in the *Criterion*. Since many reviews were given their titles by the editors of the periodicals in which they appeared, and since Eliot and his editors occasionally changed the titles of those essays that he chose to collect in book form, the editors have provided Eliot's final title ("Hamlet"), with the first and American titles ("Hamlet and his Problems") given in the notes. Titles of reviews, and titles under which Eliot's letters to editors of periodicals and newspapers appeared, were presumably supplied by his editors but are retained for ease of recognition.

Prose Transcription Errors

Under pressure to meet deadlines, Eliot frequently made transcription errors when quoting passages of prose from other authors. His editors were often inattentive to these matters, and frequently did not arrange for him to read proof. Thus, the editors of the present edition have silently restored dropped words, supplied missing ellipses, added overlooked italics and quotation marks, and placed capitals made from lowercase letters in brackets. More substantial alterations are indicated in the textual notes. Eliot often provided selected page numbers for prose quotations in parentheses in the texts; when he did not do so, the editors have supplied missing numbers in brackets in the texts and in parentheses in the notes.

Misquotations of Poetry

When minor transcription errors occur in lines or passages of poetry quoted directly from a volume under review, they are silently corrected. However, some of Eliot's misquotations are more slips of memory than mistranscriptions. Such misquotations are preserved in the text and corrected in the

notes. In some instances, the misquotations affect the commentary, and in every instance, it is of interest to observe how Eliot held certain passages of poetry, especially from Dante and Shakespeare, in memory and summoned them spontaneously for unchecked use. Frank Kermode, editor of Eliot's *Selected Prose* (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), took pains to point out such misquotations in Eliot's collected essays, "not from pedantry, but from a conviction that in the poet Eliot misquotation is sometimes creative" (307).

American / English Punctuation Practice

From 1909 through the preface to the second edition (1928) of *The Sacred Wood*, all of Eliot's prose was printed in what is now called American punctuation style, with double inverted commas for quotations, punctuation inside quotation marks. English periodicals such as the *Egoist*, the *Athenaeum*, the *Nation*, the *New Statesmen*, the *Bookman*, the *Spectator*, *TLS*, and others that printed Eliot's work used this common style. From the publication of *For Lancelot Andrewes* in 1928, however, all of the Faber editions of his collected essays were printed in English punctuation style, with single inverted commas, punctuation outside (inconsistently so). In editing *The Criterion*, Eliot followed the American style from 1922 to 1926, when it shifted to English style, with punctuation inconsistently inside and outside quotations. Many English periodicals, particularly those published jointly in America, continued to use the American style, and Eliot continued to publish unreprinted essays in American periodicals. Moreover, the American editions of his work systematically converted the Faber editions to American style. In an attempt to achieve uniformity and minimize error, the editors of this edition, in consultation with the publishers, and the Eliot Estate, follow the American style throughout. The earlier Faber policy of italicizing all set-off quotations in Eliot's texts has not been followed.

Translations

A number of Eliot's essays and prefaces were commissioned by a foreign audience, translated, and published only in foreign translation. The translation and the English original are both included when possible. If the original English text has not been recovered, an English translation is provided. When an English text first published in translation was revised before publication in English, the substantive alterations are noted.

Annotations

Eliot's works were translated into thirty-eight languages in his lifetime, and his writings continue to attract a worldwide readership. In annotating this edition, the editors aim to serve scholars, students, and modern readers who come to Eliot's prose from numerous languages, backgrounds, and fields of interest – not only in literary criticism but in economics, education, philosophy, politics, theology, cultural theory, popular culture, and other disciplines. Eliot was reluctant to collect much of his prose because he felt that many of his remarks, originally composed under the pressure of deadlines, would need qualification, clarification, and correction. We have attempted to create notes that will enhance and clarify his highly referential prose, and have been mindful of both the immediate and the larger intellectual context of his writings: we draw upon his correspondence; where no source is shown, it may be assumed that the original letter or carbon copy is in the collection of the Eliot Estate or at the Faber and Faber archive. When it is helpful, we make cross-references to earlier and later comments. We have attempted to identify every specific literary and nonliterary allusion; to trace all references to newspapers, periodicals, and other documents; and to identify the books and editions that he employed. As part of our larger aim to illuminate the breadth of Eliot's learning and the depths of recall that inform and enrich the texture of his critical prose, we have noted relevant inscriptions and markings in his personal copies. Eliot's own notes are indicated with an asterisk (*) after the superscript number; notes that include textual variants are indicated with a dagger (†) after the superscript.

II. UNPUBLISHED PROSE

Much of Eliot's prose was written not for publication but for reading or broadcasting to specific audiences on particular occasions: philosophical essays for postgraduate seminars, tutorials, and philosophical societies at Harvard, Oxford, and Cambridge; addresses as president of the Alliance Française, London Library, Virgil Society, Books Across the Sea, Académie Septentrionale, and other organizations; responses as recipient of honorary degrees, medals, and other honors; remarks at the opening of exhibitions and conferences; and appeals in aid of civic and charitable causes. Eliot chose to put these items aside as ephemeral materials in the life of a man of letters. Because of the scholarly interest and biographical richness that they contain, they are included, with thanks to Mrs. Eliot, in

this edition. More than one hundred unpublished items, all of which are identified as such, are incorporated chronologically into the individual volumes of *The Complete Prose*. The first is an undergraduate essay, "The Defects of Kipling," written at Harvard in March 1909, and the last a telegram, "Tribute to John F. Kennedy," read by Jacqueline Kennedy at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., on 25 November 1964.

The early philosophical essays exist in pencil or ink manuscripts and in typescripts with holograph emendations. After Eliot left graduate school, he composed nearly all of his work on a typewriter, with frequent typeovers (xxxxx) and holograph corrections and insertions. On some occasions, his first wife, Vivien, or a secretary, typed his drafts. The BBC usually retyped his broadcast scripts, which often contain last-minute emendations. In editing the large variety of Eliot's unpublished writings, we attempt to present texts that are as accurate, clear, and readable as possible, with a minimum of emendation. To distinguish them from published writings, the editors have preserved some of the physical characteristics of the manuscripts (such as underlinings), choosing not to regularize them as published items lest they lose all the visual character of their composition. The unpublished texts are introduced by headnotes that provide the occasion, date, place, and context of their preparation and presentation. The location and physical description of the manuscripts are given in the textual notes, together with editorial notation of substantial alterations and deletions made by Eliot himself.

Eliot's unpublished texts are edited according to the following additional principles:

- False starts and insignificant deletions are excised, but ~~strikeouts~~, when illuminating or clarifying, are retained or given in notes.
- Typed or holograph underlinings for emphasis have been retained; occasional red ribbon color changes, an alternate method of emphasizing words and phrases, are represented in bold; underlined titles and foreign words are italicized; unpunctuated or mispunctuated titles of books, plays, and poems are corrected and standardized.
- Abbreviated titles, names, and places are expanded, as are ampersands, but his occasional use of cf., i.e., e.g., sc., passim, etc., have been retained, unitalicized.

Obvious typographical errors have been silently corrected; readings of illegible words are followed by a bracketed question mark [?]; most compound adjectives (seventeenth-century poetry) are hyphenated, consistent with his ordinary practice.

Eliot's variant spellings–British, American, period (to-day), alternate (behoves)–are retained; opening and / or closing inverted commas (quotation marks) have been supplied where Eliot has overlooked them; inconsistent placement of punctuation inside and outside inverted commas is standardized; missing accents and diacriticals are supplied.

When the volume and/or page numbers for a quotation are given by Eliot in the margin or in the text, the numbers are placed in parentheses at the end of the quotation or in the notes; when editorially supplied, they are placed in brackets.

Clearly superfluous or unintended punctuation (commas before parentheses), and some unintended double punctuation (;–) have been deleted or corrected. Where the omission of punctuation causes confusion, it has been supplied; when, in Eliot's hand, the use of a semicolon or colon is unclear, the editors have interpreted the punctuation in terms of clarity and grammatical structure.

Eliot's substantive marginal comments related to the text but not part of the body of the text are quoted and noted where they occur. When Eliot makes marginal statements with lines drawn for insertion in the text during the process of composition, they are identified in the notes. When it is clear that Eliot has made insertions from the margin or an appended page *after* the body of the text was drafted or completed, as in his essay on "A Neglected Aspect of Chapman" in volume 2, they are introduced into the text with a bracketed and italicized phrase, [*insertion*:] or [*appended insertion*:], with the end of the insertion similarly indicated [*end insertion*]. His occasional notes and outlines on the verso of a page are recorded in the textual notes.

III. FUTURE EDITIONS

The contents of this edition, which are presented in eight separate volumes, are enhanced by the inclusion of more than two hundred published items that are not recorded in the Gallup bibliography. As extensive as our collection efforts have been, we are confident that fugitive items will be

found, and we encourage readers to submit them for inclusion in the edition, which is managed and maintained by Johns Hopkins University Press. A future digital platform will ensure that *The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot* is a living edition, with the capacity to include newly discovered prose items, to correct errors, and to provide more illustrations and digital innovations for readers than would be possible in a print edition. To place Eliot's primary prose before scholars and readers expeditiously, the editors include only those writings in this first edition. Eventually, however, a wide range of secondary prose materials will be available, including (1) additional juvenilia; (2) "Foreign Exchanges," Eliot's monthly articles for *Lloyds Bank Monthly*, 1923-25; (3) unpublished personal notes and notes from student classes; (4) additional interviews; (5) unpublished book reports for Faber and Faber; (6) blurbs and endorsements; (7) outlines of informal talks; and (8) Eliot's translations of works by other authors, primarily for publication in the *Criterion.* As additional resources become accessible, we envision a website that contains both an increasingly comprehensive and accurate critical edition and an invaluable repository of prose materials for researchers and readers in a new digital age of Eliot studies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our greatest debt is to the late Valerie Eliot, for her tireless devotion over many years to collecting, preserving, and ordering her husband's multiform writings, and for her confidence and trust in commissioning *The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot*. We are also indebted to her personal assistant, Debbie Whitfield, who has graciously facilitated our access to editorial materials over several years, and to trustees Judith Hooper and Clare Reihill of the Eliot Estate.

The editors are grateful to Stephen Page and Matthew Hollis of Faber and Faber for their support of this edition, and to archivist Robert Brown for providing access to and assistance with archival materials.

We are indebted to the late Finn M. W. Caspersen, the late William B. Warren, and the trustees of the Hodson Trust for a substantial grant to the Johns Hopkins University Press to support this multivolume project. We prize the vision, technical expertise, and dedication of Kathleen Keane and members of the Press who have made this edition a reality: Andre Barnett, Gregory Britton, Michael Carroll, Becky Clark, Kim Johnson, Matt McAdam, Julie McCarthy, Claire McCabe Tamberino, Wendy Queen, Martha Sewall, and project manager Marcus Seiler, Bridgeline Digital.

The Beck Foundation and the Beck Center for Electronic Collections at Emory University provided invaluable financial, technical, and personnel support for the creation of the electronic database of Eliot's prose writings. Alice Hickcox, electronic supervisor of the Center, has overseen the construction of the database, trained staff and students, and given professional presentations on its implementation. She and staff member Erika Farr were extraordinarily helpful and patient with the editors as the project moved through its various incarnations, and Sara Palmer assisted greatly with final encoding. Dean Robert A. Paul of Emory College and Deans Rick Rubinson and Lisa Tedesco of the Laney Graduate School of Arts and Sciences provided fellowship support for the graduate members of Team Eliot: Lori Leavell, Erin Sells, Stewart Varner, Shannon Hipp, Jessie Dunbar, John Davidson, Jae Turner, and Sumita Chakraborty. The SIRE Undergraduate Research Program at Emory provided a succession of fellows who made significant contributions to the database and other aspects of the editorial

project: Ryan Plocher, Lisa Sweat, Ali Madani, Wesley Pickard, Shalini Ramachandran, Elizabeth Peele, Mary Fernandez, and Fiona O'Carroll. Alan Cattier, Ade Afonja, Chris Roddy, Steve Collins, and James Bias of Academic Technology and the Woodruff Library have kept the database up and running since its creation in 2006. The English Department and MFA program at the University of North Carolina Greensboro provided support for editorial research assistance from Julian Aaron, Elly Bookman, Abigail Browning, Catherine Clifton, Logen Cure, Joseph McCormick, Michael Pontacoloni, Dalea Reichgott, and Anastasia Smith. And we are grateful for the assistance of current and former graduate students at UNCG, Nancy Adams, Michael Bedsole, Jacky Brammer, Amanda Keith, Cheryl Marsh, and April Williams.

Through the Institute of English Studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London, under the direction of Professor Warwick Gould, the Eliot editorial project received a substantial three-year grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council to support the research of our English editors. The Institute has further provided an editorial office and technical support for all members of the editorial team, which has benefited from the assistance of Wim Van Mierlo and Conor Wyer of the Institute staff.

We are thankful for the generosity and cooperation of Archibald Henderson, Eliot's bibliographer, who shared with us scores of newly discovered prose items that he has brought to the bibliography through rigorous research.

We are indebted to Professors David Wharton at UNCG, Jennifer Grotz at the University of Rochester, and Mark Schumacher at the Jackson Library, UNCG, for their unstinting assistance with translations of Eliot's use of Latin, Greek, and French. We are grateful as well to Jayme Stayer, S.J., John Carroll University, for his patient and thorough reading of various drafts of the volume.

We are especially grateful to the co-editor of volumes 5 and 7, and linguistic advisor for all the volumes, Iman Javadi, Institute of English Studies, for his generous and careful reading of the penultimate draft of volume 2. Other co-editors of previous and succeeding volumes offered valuable help at various stages of the project, including Jewel Spears Brooker, Eckerd College; David Chinitz, Loyola University Chicago; and Frances Dickey, University of Missouri. Other members of the greater editorial team were also helpful: Jennifer Formichelli, Boston University; Jason Harding, Durham University; Sir Christopher Ricks, Boston University; Jim McCue,

Institute of English Studies; John Haffenden, University of Sheffield. We are thankful for helpful recommendations of the advisory board: John Haffenden, Paul Keegan, the late Sir Frank Kermode, Andrew McNeillie, Edward Mendelson, Clare Reihill, and Sir Christopher Ricks.

Research support for the edition has been provided by fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation; the Beinecke Library, Yale University; the Houghton Library, Harvard University; Emory University, and UNCG.

We are thankful for the help of the following faculty members at UNCG: Jim Clark, English; Ben Clarke, English; Mitchell Croatt, Chemistry; Keith Cushman, English; Michelle Dowd, English; Mary Ellis Gibson, English; Christopher Hodgkins, English; Jennifer Keith, English; Terry Kennedy, English; Arndt Niebisch, Languages, Literatures, and Cultures; Anne Wallace, English.

We are grateful to the following librarians and libraries for assistance and permissions: Denison J. Beach, Susan Halpert, Leslie A. Morris and William Stoneman, Houghton Library, Harvard University; Randy Bixby, Morris Library, Southern Illinois University; Rachel Bowles, BBC Written Archives Centre, Caversham; Robin Carlow, Harvard University Archives; Gill Disley, Victoria & Albert Museum, London; Timothy Driscoll, Harvard University Archives; Stephen Enniss, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas; David Faulds, Teresa Burk, Naomi Nelson, Robert W. Woodruff Library, Emory University; Sarah Ethier, Archives, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee; Wayne G. Hammond, Chapin Library, Williams College; Eileen M. Heeran, Carl A. Kroch Library, Cornell University; Priscilla Holmes, Natalia Sciarini, and Patricia Willis, Beinecke Library, Yale University; H. Lowery, Special Collections, University of Bristol; Patricia McGuire, Modern Archive Centre, King's College, Cambridge; Rebecca Parry and Robin Smith, National Library of Scotland; Mark Pomeroy, Royal Academy of Arts Archive, London; Gregory J. Prickman, Special Collections, University of Iowa; Gabriel Sewell, Lambeth Palace Library, London; Steven Siegel, Library director and archivist, 92nd Street Y, New York; Karen Stanton, Manuscripts and Special Collections, Nottingham University librarian; Institute of Education, University of London; the staff of Lloyds Bank TSB Group Archives; and Washington University in St. Louis archives; Gaylor Callahan, Jenny Dale, Nancy Fogarty, Mark Schumacher, and Joe Williams, Jackson Library, UNCG; Jo Klett, Sydney Jones Library, University of Liverpool; Katie Sambrook,

Foyle Special Collections Library, King's College, London; Nancy W. Shawcross, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania; June Ellner, Special Libraries and Archives at University of Aberdeen, Scotland; Reference Services Department, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh.

The following individuals have provided valuable assistance of various kinds: Anne Margaret Daniel, The New School, New York; Julia Daniel, Loyola University Chicago; Melanie Fathman, St. Louis; Stephen Forcer, University of Birmingham; David Fuller, Durham University; the late Donald Gallup; James Gifford, University of Victoria; David Goldie, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow; Margaret Greaves, Emory University; Nancy Hargrove, Mississippi State University; Anne Hartle, Emory University; Richie Hofmann, Emory University; the late Peter Howard, Serendipity Books; Carey A. Karmel, New York; Tara Christie Kinsey, Princeton University; George Koppelman, Cultured Oyster Books; Jim Loucks, Zanesville, Ohio; Timothy Materer, University of Missouri; Beth McIntosh, University of Western Ontario; A. David Moody, University of York; Greg Morgan, F.M.V.D., Rome; John D. Morgenstern, Clemson University; James Pethica, Williams College; John Porter, Lloyds Bank TSB; Patrick Query, United States Military Academy, West Point; Lawrence Rainey, University of York; Philip Lyndon Reynolds, Emory University; George Simmers, Brooke University, Oxford; Ian Smith, Kingston University, London; Mark Storey, London Library; Andrew Watts, University of Birmingham; Peter White, ProQuest; James Matthew Wilson, Villanova University; Randall Woods.

ABBREVIATIONS

PUBLISHED WORKS BY T. S. ELIOT

CPP	*The Complete Poems and Plays of T. S. Eliot* (London: Faber & Faber, 1969)
FLA	*For Lancelot Andrewes: Essays on Style and Order* (London: Faber & Gwyer, 1928)
HJD	*Homage to John Dryden: Three Essays on Poetry of the Seventeenth Century* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1924)
KE	*Knowledge and Experience in the Philosophy of F. H. Bradley* (London: Faber & Faber, 1964)
IMH	*Inventions of the March Hare: Poems 1909-1917*, ed. Christopher Ricks (London: Faber & Faber, 1996)
L1	*The Letters of T. S. Eliot*, Vol. 1: 1898-1922, revised edition, ed. Valerie Eliot and Hugh Haughton (London: Faber & Faber, 2009)
L2	*The Letters of T. S. Eliot*, Vol. 2: 1923-1925, ed. Valerie Eliot and Hugh Haughton (London: Faber & Faber, 2009)
L3	*The Letters of T. S. Eliot*, Vol. 3: 1926-1927, ed. Valerie Eliot and John Haffenden (London: Faber & Faber, 2012)
L4	*The Letters of T. S. Eliot*, Vol. 4: 1928-1929, ed. Valerie Eliot and John Haffenden (London: Faber & Faber, 2013)
OPP	*On Poetry and Poets* (London: Faber & Faber, 1957)
SE	*Selected Essays*, 3rd ed. (London: Faber & Faber, 1951)
SW	*The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism* (London: Methuen, 1920)
TCC	*To Criticize the Critic* (London: Faber & Faber, 1965)
TWL	*The Waste Land* as printed in *The Complete Poems and Plays of T. S. Eliot* (London: Faber & Faber, 1969)
UPUC	*The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*, 2nd ed. (London: Faber & Faber, 1964)
VMP	*The Varieties of Metaphysical Poetry*, ed. Ronald Schuchard (London: Faber & Faber, 1993; New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1994)

WLF	*The Waste Land: A Facsimile and Transcript of the Original Drafts*, ed. Valerie Eliot (London: Faber & Faber, 1971; New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1971)

PERIODICALS

A&L	*Art & Letters*
Ath	*The Athenaeum*
N&A	*The Nation and the Athenaeum*
NRF	*La Nouvelle Revue française*
TLS	*Times Literary Supplement*
VF	*Vanity Fair*

OTHER WORKS

Contemporary Reviews	*T. S. Eliot: The Contemporary Reviews*, ed. Jewel Spears Brooker (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004)
Diary 2	*The Diary of Virginia Woolf, Vol. II: 1920-1924*, ed. Anne Olivier Bell and Andrew McNeillie (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978)
Diary 3	*The Diary of Virginia Woolf, Vol. III: 1925-1930*, ed. Anne Olivier Bell and Andrew McNeillie (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981)
DC1	*The Inferno of Dante*, Temple Classics edition, trans. John Aitken Carlyle (London: J. M. Dent, 1909)
DC2	*The Purgatorio of Dante*, Temple Classics edition, trans. Thomas Okey (London: J. M. Dent, 1910)
DC3	*The Paradiso of Dante*, Temple Classics edition, trans. Philip H. Wicksteed (London: J. M. Dent, 1910)
Gallup	Donald Gallup, *T. S. Eliot: A Bibliography*, revised & extended edition (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1969)
Grosart	*The Complete Poems of Sir John Davies*, vol. 1, ed. Alexander B. Grosart (London: Chatto and Windus, 1876)
Grierson I, II	*The Poems of John Donne*, 2 vols., ed. Herbert J. C. Grierson (Oxford: Clarendon, 1912)
Lives	Samuel Johnson, *Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets*, Chandos Classics, new edition (London: Frederick Warne, 1872)

MLP	*Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems of the Seventeenth Century: Donne to Butler*, ed. Herbert J. C. Grierson (Oxford: Clarendon, 1921)
ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. 60 vols. Oxford. Oxford University Press, 2004
Ser	*The Sermons of John Donne*, ed. G. R. Potter and Evelyn M. Spearing, 10 vols. (Berkeley: U of California Press, 1953-62)

ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS

Beinecke	The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University
Berg	Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of English and American Literature, New York Public Library
Harvard	University Archives, Harvard University
Houghton	The Houghton Library, Harvard University
King's	Modern Archive Center, King's College, Cambridge

This page intentionally left blank

ILLUSTRATIONS

Illustrations following page 389.

1. George Wyndham

2. George Saintsbury

3. J. M. Robertson

4. T. S. Eliot's completed application for membership to the London Library

5. Bruce Richmond, editor of The Times Literary Supplement

6. T. S. Eliot's signed ticket to The Witch of Edmonton, *revived by the Phoenix Society on 24 and 26 April 1921*

7. Charles Whibley

8. William Archer

9. Sybil Thorndike as the lead in the 1920 production of Gilbert Murray's translation of Euripides' Medea *at the Holborn Empire (*Illustrated London News*, 13 March 1920, front page)*

10. Gilbert Murray

11. John Middleton Murry

12. Scofield Thayer, editor of The Dial

*13. The Guitrys: Lucien and Sacha Guitry, with Yvonne Printemps (*Illustrated London News, *15 April 1922, 548)*

14. Julien Benda

15. Table of Contents, The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism *(1920: 2nd ed., 1928)*

16. Cover of Wyndham Lewis's review, The Tyro: A Review of the Arts of Painting, Sculpture, and Design, *1 (1922)*

17. Richard Aldington

Illustrations following page 566.

18. Facsimile, first page of revised typescript of "London Letter: May, 1921," Dial *70 (June 1921)*

19. Lydia Lopokova

*20. Igor Stravinsky (*Illustrated London News, *25 June 1921, 870)*

21. The Russian Ballet, Lydia Sokolova in the 1921 revival of Stravinsky's Le Sacre du Printemps *at the Prince's Theatre (*Illustrated London News, *2 July 1921, 7).*

22. Mistinguett (Jeanne-Marie Bourgeois)

23. Facsimile, first page of unrevised holograph of "London Letter: June, 1922," Dial *73 (July 1922)*

24. Facsimile, "Bel Esprit" subscription form

25. Cover page, The Criterion: A Quarterly Review*, 1 (October 1922)*

26. Marie Lloyd

27. Sarah Bernhardt

28. Léonide Massine, as the Chinese Conjurer in Jean Cocteau's Parade *(London, 1919)*

29. Wyndham Lewis

30. Table of Contents, Homage to John Dryden: Three Essays on Poetry of the Seventeenth Century *(1924)*

31. Cover design by Vanessa Bell, Homage to John Dryden: Three Essays on Poetry of the Seventeenth Century *(1924), number three in the Hogarth Essays series*

32. Jacques Rivière, editor of the NRF

33. Theresa Garrett Eliot's pencil drawing of T. S. Eliot delivering his final Clark lecture in the Hall of Trinity College, Cambridge, 9 March 1926

*34. The Church of St. Magnus the Martyr, London, before and during the construction of Adelaide House (*The Times*, 19 March 1924, 18)*

The COMPLETE PROSE *of*
T. S. Eliot

This page intentionally left blank

Marivaux[1]

Art & Letters, 2 (Spring 1919) 80-85

This is the man whom Gautier noticed as the discoverer of *l'analyse sérieuse de l'amour*.[2] Marivaux has been ignored in England, and has hardly received his due at the hands of French critics. His due, and no more, from the critics; it is admitted that he wrote half a dozen of the best comedies, and two of the best novels in the language. But critics are impersonal people, engaged usefully in dissociating ideas and discharging accumulated pretensions; and they avoid intimacies with authors. Marivaux attracts neither the classical nor the romantic mind: to the former he is heretical and dangerous; he is too personal, he is not the representative of a party; for the latter he is too reticent – the man is altogether in the work.

Marivaux' biography is one of rumours and glimpses. Even the useful book of M. Larroumet gives us very little: an uneventful life, first of hackwork, then of reputation and the Academy, but always of poverty.[3] There remains the report, unprecise but persistent, of his passion for Sylvia, of the Théâtre Italien, the actress who played his Luciles and Angéliques.[4] At any rate, he seems to have made a suitable marriage elsewhere, for of his wife we hear almost nothing; and M. de Marivaux was very popular in society.[5] At Madame de Lambert's, Madame de Tencin's, later at Madame du Deffand's, he was considered a good talker, a charming reader of his own plays, but a person very difficult to manage. He was timid and independent. "Il n'y eut jamais, je crois," said Madame de Tencin, "d'amour propre plus délicat, plus chatouilleux et plus craintif."[6] Collé wrote: "il fallait le louer et le caresser continuellement comme une jolie femme."[7] And Grimm, a less friendly critic than either of these two, says: "il entendait finesse à tout . . . il supposait volontiers qu'on cherchait à le mortifier, ce qui l'a rendu malheureux est son commerce épineux et insupportable."[8] Marmontel once offended Marivaux by smiling as the latter came into a room. He gave Marivaux a very reasonable explanation of the misunderstanding, and Marivaux professed to be satisfied. Yet Marivaux was never again able to regard Marmontel without some distrust and hostility. In spite of this hedgehog disposition, however, Marivaux did not lack friends; he was intimate with Fontenelle, who was his most persistent backer for the

Academy; and current opinion records with emphasis his generosity and kindness.[9]

Personal detail, as a matter of fact, is unimportant in the case of Marivaux. What is to be appreciated is the particular moment at which the work of Marivaux appeared. He belongs to the period of the Regency and the first years of Louis XV; his best plays had all been written by 1746. When Marivaux began to write plays, the age of Molière was well over;[10] several years of weak imitation had prepared Paris for receiving favourably something entirely new; something making use of different machinery, investigating different emotions, disregarding all traditions and laying hold on a new world as the material of its art. Then came perhaps not the greatest, but certainly the most civilised period of French art and letters. Magniloquence and rhetoric were discarded; sentimentalism had not yet appeared. Moralists are replaced by observers. Instead of Rochefoucauld, we have Vauvenargues;[11] instead of Madame de Sévigné, Madame du Deffand;[12] instead of Molière, Marivaux; and instead of Racine also, Marivaux. Between Claude and Poussin on the one hand, and Greuze on the other, is Watteau; and the similarity between Watteau and Marivaux, both the men and the work, is more than superficial.[13] Perhaps the temper which I am endeavouring to localise existed only in a very few men; but very few ever can be civilised. The age, at least, was propitious, and the painting of Watteau, the *Dialogues des Morts* of Fontenelle, and the plays and novels of Marivaux are the result.[14] In England, there was Chesterfield, perhaps Horace Walpole.[15] Since Rousseau, the flood of barbarism has left very few peaks. It is difficult to be civilised alone.

By the time when Marivaux wrote, Pascal was solemn and orotund; Corneille stiff and absurd;[16] Molière grotesque; there remains only Racine, admired of Marivaux and of Voltaire. Even Rochefoucauld is alien to the eighteenth century. For Rochefoucauld is hard, but there is not in him even the germ of cynicism: he is an implacable moralist.[17] With the rest of the seventeenth century, he persists in measuring men by an invisible standard, fundamentally a Christian standard. The later eighteenth century has not the standards of the moralist; but it has the standards of humanitarianism, which are political standards; and it thereby measures as short of the seventeenth as the politician always measures short of the moralist. But the age of Marivaux refuses to be measured in this way. Its world is a very stripped world; there is no moral earnestness, and no sentimentality. It does not deny the emotions; it analyses them. It is incapable of laughter,

and incapable of tears; tragedy and farce it avoids; it is too well bred for the confession; for it has not the egotism – which is essentially bad manners – necessary for the confession. Yet the emotions are there, and not, as with Rousseau, perversely exalted, or as with Diderot, perversely degraded.[18]

A comedy without laughter and without exaggeration, a comedy not dependent upon dexterities of theatrical construction or cleverness of dialogue, such a comedy Marivaux invented as has hardly existed before or since. There is something of Marivaux in de Musset, but there is nothing of Molière in Marivaux.[19] He was from the beginning a Modern; so had Molière been a modern, but his modernity is quite other, and more ancient than Marivaux'. Marivaux is certainly not a "classicist," and as certainly not a Romantic. In his earliest play (not reprinted in the present edition) there are obvious borrowings from *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*;[20] but Marivaux quickly discovered that this was not the proper direction for his talent; and in his later plays he is almost without antecedents. And there is a premonition of Marivaux in *Les Amants Magnifiques*, but this again is an exception in Molière.[21] In fact, the true genre of Molière is not comedy, but farce; either buffoonery, as in *Scapin*, or ethical farce, as in *Tartuffe*; but farce always, in *L'Avare,* in *L'École des Femmes*, in *Les Précieuses Ridicules*, in *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*; even *Le Misanthrope*, isolated as it is, has a farcical touch.[22] Molière is always on the verge of a pun:

> Monsieur Jourdain: Mamamouchi, c'est à dire en notre langue, paladin.
> Madame Jourdain: Baladin! Êtes-vous en âge de danser des ballets?[23]

I doubt whether this would even have amused Marivaux. His humour never explodes; even his clowns are of a piece with the rest of his characters. And when the humour takes the same verbal turn as with Molière, yet the significance is quite different. "Ah! la belle chose que de savoir quelque chose!" says M. Jourdain.[24] "Il est vrai qu'il me fâcherait," says Araminte in *Les Fausses Confidences*, when it is suggested that she should deny admission to her lover, "mais il serait à propos qu'il me fâcherait."[25] This is not the bite of farce, but of social comedy. In *L'Épreuve* the amorous farmer, Maître Blaise, is what any other writer would have made a farcical character; at best, a Tony Lumpkin; but though he speaks in dialect, he is not quite laughable.[26] Lucidor first offers Maître Blaise a large sum of money not to marry Angélique, and Maître Blaise accepts; later he offers him a larger sum of money if he will marry her, and Maître Blaise accepts again.

> Angélique: Sur ce pied-là, vous ne m'aimez pas.
> Maître Blaise: Si fait da: ça m'avait un peu quitté; mais je vous r'aime chèrement à cette heure.
> Angélique: À cause de vingt mille francs?
> Maître Blaise: À cause de vous, et pour l'amour d'eux.[27]

Marivaux never condescends to fun. Just as none of his clowns are buffoons, so none of his old men are quite ridiculous. Even when M. Remy, the uncle in *Les Fausses Confidences*, is made to say

> Comment donc m'imposer silence! a moi, procureur! Savez-vous bien qu'il y a cinquante ans que je parle, madame Argante?[28]

he is absurd only for an instant, and only from a passing point of view; the whole scene is made amusing, but it is not done by directing laughter upon any one character. The valets and the confidentes too, the Frontins and Lisettes, are subordinate roles; they interfere, but they do not control, and they are not themselves amusing in an essentially different way from their masters and mistresses. The typical valet of the old comedy is Scapin, literally taking his master's affairs into his own hands and his profession is obviously to pull the leg of his master's father. In *L'Épreuve* Marivaux' Frontin assumes a role at his master's bidding, and with a very bad grace; at the end of the play he is made to say

> Je suis de si bonne composition, que ce sera moi qui vous verserai à boire à table.[29]

He has no kinship to Scapin, and none to Figaro, that revolutionary valet usurping the stage in a new fashion.[30] He plays his part in the comedy, and none of his characters does more. Marivaux' people are a small and well-bred company, none of whom engrosses the conversation. They are in fact too well-bred to be emphatic individuals; as in a polished society, each comes merely to play his rôle; and the rôle is dictated by the eternal situation.

It is with a surprisingly small company of actors, and apparent monotony of plots, that Marivaux gets his effects. He does not even invent new names; the Dorantes, the Lisettes, the Madame Argantes, turn up again and again, and they might be the same people, come back to play at life as an end-game with the chessmen shifted about. Yet, though each of them is shadowy, a roomful of them is very real; and it is always to the room, to the

situation, that Marivaux directs our attention. And in these fourteen plays Marivaux displays an amazing skill in varying the same situation. There is no plot at all, in the ordinary sense, yet the construction is extraordinarily dextrous. Two lovers are in love at the beginning, and they are brought together at the end; the skill consists in keeping them apart for one act or three or five; and this Marivaux does entirely without the use of machinery, without villainous parents or lying friends, without ravishments or disguises. In *L'Épreuve* it is that Lucidor wishes to test Angélique's love for him; in *Le Legs* the Marquis is merely too timid to propose to the Countess; in *Les Fausses Confidences* Dorante is too timid to propose to the widow; in *Les Serments Indiscrets* Damis and Lucile have sworn not to marry, before they have seen each other.[31] In every case the end comes at the same moment: the moment when love has been confessed on both sides. The continued postponement, in dialogue, is the true "marivaudage."[32] In *Le Legs* the exasperated countess, after a prolonged interview with her lover, exclaims at last

> Qu'on me dise en vertu de quoi cet homme-là s'est mis dans la tête que je ne l'aime point! Je suis quelquefois, par impatience, tentée de lui dire que je l'aime, pour lui montrer qu'il n'est qu'un idiot.[33]

In the exposition of the gradual appearance and self-consciousness of love Marivaux is really a master. With the passion itself, its possible intensity or depth, once it is fully conscious and outspoken, Marivaux has little to do; his business is to analyse the ingredients which go into it, the motives and interests which bring it about. It is with the "petits mouvements du cœur," half conscious, that Marivaux is concerned.[34] And in this, an age remote from Molière, he is in fact the scholar of Racine. In the French theatre Racine is the first and the greatest anatomist of the heart. In Corneille are visible undigested elements; Roman stiffness, renaissance pedantry; reminiscences of Plautus and Terence and of Spanish exoticism. Compare *Le Menteur* and a comedy by Marivaux, and you will find the difference between a world which is dead, and a world which is still alive.[35] Molière retains to the end a Gallic buffoonery. And in *Les Plaideurs* the old world lingers on; but in *Phèdre* the analysis of love brings us close to Marivaux.[36] Such analysis, as in the "Que faisiez-vous alors?" of Phèdre or the "What says the married woman?" of Shakespeare's Cleopatra, is marginal comedy.[37]

In *Les Serments Indiscrets* Lucile, hidden in a closet, has had her first sight of Damis while he explains to her waiting-woman his determination

never to marry. Later, commenting on this episode, in words which a little break the frame of the comedy, but which perfectly express the women of nearly all of Marivaux' comedies, and of the Marianne of his novel as well, [she] says

> Quand j'y songe, notre amour ne fait pas toujours l'éloge de la personne aimée; il fait bien plus souvent la critique de la personne qui aime; je ne le sens que trop. Notre vanité et notre coquetterie, voilà les plus grandes sources de nos passions; voilà d'où les hommes tirent le plus souvent tout ce qu'ils valent. Qui nous ôterait les faiblesses de notre cœur ne leur laisserait guère de qualités estimables. Ce cabinet où j'étais cachée pendant que Damis te parlait, qu'on le retranche de mon aventure, peut-être que je n'aurais point d'amour; car pourquoi est-ce que j'aime? Parce qu'on me défiait de plaire, et que j'ai voulu venger mon visage; n'est-ce pas là une belle origine de tendresse? Voilà pourtant ce qu'a produit un cabinet de plus dans mon histoire.[38]

But it is the novels, *Marianne* and *Le Paysan Parvenue*, that deserve the most attention.[39]

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Likely composed after 29 Mar, when TSE mentions *Art & Letters* but not yet his contribution (*L1* 331). In Autumn 1917 he met with co-editors of the newly founded quarterly, Frank Rutter and Herbert Read, and promised a contribution; "Marivaux" was the first of four essays by him to appear there before publication ceased in 1920. TSE later wrote that the *Criterion* was meant to "serve as a kind of successor to the defunct *Art and Letters*." "Last Words," *Criterion* (Jan 1939), 270. Though this essay was not officially listed as a book review, TSE apparently composed it with the second volume of the recent edition of Marivaux's *Théâtre*, ed. Émile Faguet (Paris: Nelson, 1916) before him.

2. *Trans*: the serious analysis of love. In his *Histoire de l'art dramatique en France depuis vingt-cinq ans* [*History of Drama in France for Twenty-Five Years*] (vol 5), Théophile Gautier writes: "Avant Marivaux, ce n'est encore que du jargon; chez lui, on commence à sentir le véritable cœur humain. À travers mille fanfreluches coquettes, on découvre quelque chose de bien nouveau pour le temps, l'analyse sérieuse de l'amour." [Before Marivaux, it's still nothing but gibberish; in his work, one begins to sense the true human heart. Through a thousand flirtatious frills, one discovers something quite new for the time, the serious analysis of love.] vol 5 (Paris: Hetzel, 1859), 292. Gautier's *Émaux et Camées* (1852) provided the model for TSE's recent quatrain poems, two of which appeared in *Art & Letters* in May 1919 ("Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar" and "Sweeney Erect").

3. Gustave Larroumet (1852-1903), *Marivaux, sa vie et ses œuvres* (Paris : Hachette, 1882).

4. Sylvia was the stage name of Giovanna-Rosa Benozzi (1700-58), a popular actress with the Théâtre-Italien (or the Comédie-Italienne), which was one of the three major Paris theaters in the eighteenth century and the venue that Marivaux preferred over its rival, the Théâtre-Français, for its lesser-known actors and its use of the Italian *commedia dell'arte*. She was cast in Marivaux's first production, *L'Amour et la Vérité* (1720), and afterward, he frequently composed his lead female roles for her specifically.

5. Marivaux married Colombe Bologne, daughter of a prosperous notary from Sens, in 1717.

6. *Trans*: "There never was, I believe, a self-love more delicate, more wayward, or more fearful." *Memoirs of Marmontel*, trans. William Dean Howells (Boston: Houghton, Osgood and Co., 1878), 1:228. Larroumet quotes this account by playwright Jean-François Marmontel (1723-99) in *Marivaux, sa vie et ses œuvres* (103). Three prominent authors and *salonnières*, Anne-Thérèse de Marguenat de Courcelles, marquise de Lambert (1647-1733), Madame Claudine Guérin de Tencin (1682-1749), and Marie Anne de Vichy-Chamrond, marquise du Deffand (1697-1780).

7. *Trans*: one had to praise and caress him continually like a pretty woman. Larroumet quotes this remark by dramatist Charles Collé (1709-83) in *Marivaux, sa vie et ses œuvres* (111).

8. *Trans*: He suspected malice in everything . . . he would often assume that people were trying to hurt him, and this left him unhappy and made his company thorny and unbearable. Larroumet includes the remark by German playwright Friedrich Melchior, Baron von Grimm (1723-1807) in *Marivaux, sa vie et ses œuvres* (100).

9. Bernard Le Bovier de Fontenelle (1657-1757) was elected to L'Académie française in Apr 1691; with his support, Marivaux won election in 1742, later to become chancellor (1750) and finally director (1759).

10. The French Regency refers to the period between 1715 and 1723, when Louis XV (1710-74) was a minor and proxy rule was in the hands of the regent, Philippe d'Orléans. The playwright Molière (Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, 1622-73), was known during the rule of Louis XIV for *Le Misanthrope* (1667) and *Le Tartuffe, ou l'Imposteur* (1669).

11. François VI, duc de La Rochefoucauld (1613-80), author of *Réflexions ou Sentences et maximes morales* (1664-78), a compendium of moral maxims and aphorisms. His intellectual successor was Luc de Clapiers, marquis de Vauvenargues (1715-47), a stoical moralist and author of *Introduction à la connaissance de l'esprit humain* (1746). TSE owned the 1881 edition of *Les Maximes de la Rochefoucauld* (Paris: Librairie des Bibliophiles).

12. Marie de Rabutin-Chantal, marquise de Sévigné (1626-96) and Madame du Deffand were both known for their correspondence.

13. Painter Antoine Watteau (1684-1721) often depicted characters from the *commedia dell'arte* and popularized the genre of the aristocratic *fêtes galantes*. Gautier draws the comparison between him and Marivaux as well: "Marivaux est le Watteau du théâtre" [Marivaux is the Watteau of the theatre]. *Histoire de l'art dramatique* (289). His predecessors, Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665) and Claude Lorrain (1600-82), were distinguished by their classical style and austerity and Jean-Baptiste Greuze (1725-1805), by his sentimental portraits and genre paintings.

14. Fontenelle's satirical *Nouveaux dialogues des morts* [*New Dialogues of the Dead*] (1683) is modeled on the ancient Greek *Dialogues of the Dead* (ca. 2 AD) by Lucian and features a range

of illustrious thinkers from across history who meet on the Elysian Fields to converse and debate.

15. Writers and politicians Philip Stanhope, 4th Earl of Chesterfield (1694-1773), known for the posthumous *Letters of the Earl of Chesterfield to his Son* (1774) and Horatio Walpole (1717-1797), author of *The Castle of Otranto* (1764).

16. Playwright Pierre Corneille (1606-84), author of the tragicomedy *Le Cid* (1637).

17. Rochefoucauld's maxims often maintain that self-love motivates human action and impedes the exercise of virtue. In TSE's "The *Boston Evening Transcript*," the speaker imagines offering a subdued farewell to the moralist and his age: "I mount the steps and ring the bell, turning / Wearily, as one would turn to nod good-bye to Rochefoucauld, / If the street were time and he at the end of the street" (*CPP* 16-17).

18. TSE regarded Denis Diderot as a proponent of "emotional scientific naturalism," which reduced emotion to the result of organs and bodily processes; "whoever wishes to understand how the nineteenth century sprang from the eighteenth," he wrote, "must read Diderot as well as Rousseau" (1.521).

19. Playwright Alfred de Musset (1810-57); in *Histoire de l'art dramatique en France*, Gautier suggests that Marivaux and Musset shared the *commedia dell'arte* as a source (290).

20. TSE echoes Larroumet, who writes that Marivaux's first play, *Le Père prudent et équitable* [*The Just and Prudent Father*] (1712) is derivative of Molière's *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* (1670): "une comédie d'écolier, toute d'imitation, pleine de réminiscences de Regnard et de Molière." [a schoolboy's comedy, all imitation, full of reminiscences of Regnard and Molière]. *Marivaux, sa vie et ses œuvres* (15-16).

21. Molière's comedy-ballet, *Les Amants magnifiques* [*The Magnificent Lovers*] (1670).

22. Molière, *Les Fourberies de Scapin* [*Scapin's Deceits*] (1671), *L'Avare* [*The Miser*] (1669), *L'École des femmes* [*The School for Wives*] (1663), *Les Précieuses ridicules* [*The Affected Misses*] (1660), *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* [*The Bourgeois Gentleman*] (1671).

23. *Trans*: Monsieur Jourdain: Mamamouchi, which means in our language paladin. / Madame Jourdain: Baladin! Are you of an age to be dancing in ballets? Molière, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, V.i. Madame Jourdain mishears the word "paladin" for "baladin," an unfavorable term for a ballet dancer derived from the Provençal for "buffoon."

24. *Trans*: Ah, how fine a thing it is to know something! *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, II.vi.

25. *Trans*: It is true that he makes me angry . . . but it would be quite appropriate that he should make me angry. Read: "à propos qu'il me fâchât." *Les Fausses Confidences* [*The False Confessions*] (1738), II.xii. *Théâtre*, ed. Faguet, 2.185.

26. Tony Lumpkin is the spoiled, uneducated stepson of a wealthy countryman whose mischievous deceits drive the plot of Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773) and whose character was reprised by Goldsmith's contemporary, John O'Keeffe, in *Tony Lumpkin in Town* (1780).

27. *Trans*: Angélique: In other words, you don't love me. Maître Blaise: Yes, I do. It had left me for a while, but I dearly love you again now. Angélique: Because of the twenty thousand francs? Maître Blaise: Because of you, and for the love of them. Marivaux, *L'Épreuve* [*The Test*] (1740), sc. xix. *Théâtre*, ed. Faguet, 2.515-16.

28. *Trans*: Force me to be silent – me, a solicitor? Do you not know that I have been talking for fifty years, madame Argante? *Les Fausses Confidences*, III.v. *Théâtre*, ed. Faguet, 2.210. Read: "Comment donc! m'imposer silence! à moi, procureur!"

29. *Trans*: I'm so well disposed toward you, madam, that I'll even fill your glass at table. *L'Épreuve*, sc. xxii. *Théâtre*, ed. Faguet, 2.521.

30. Scapin is the conniving servant in Molière's *Les Fourberies de Scapin*; Figaro occupies a similar role in Pierre Beaumarchais's *Le Barbier de Séville* [*The Barber of Seville*] (1775) and *La Folle Journée, ou le Mariage de Figaro* [*The Mad Day, or The Marriage of Figaro*] (1785); both derive from the comic servants of the *commedia dell'arte*.

31. *Les Serments Indiscrets* [*Careless Vows*] (1732)

32. Horace Walpole was the first to use the derogatory word "marivaudage" – the witty and refined banter characteristic of Marivaux's dialogues – in 1765; George Saintsbury later described it as "considerable affectation under a mask of simplicity" conveyed with "abundant, if somewhat precious wit." *A Short History of French Literature* (Oxford 1882), 410.

33. *Trans*: Could someone please tell me by what virtue that man has got it in his head that I do not love him? I am sometimes tempted, by impatience, to tell him that I love him, to show him that he is nothing but an idiot. *Le Legs* [*The Will*] (1736), sc. xx. *Théâtre*, ed. Faguet, 2.288.

34. *Trans*: minute movements of the heart. Adapted from Stendhal, who writes in *De l'amour* (1822) that prose should "donner une idée claire et précise des mouvements de cœur" [give a clear and precise idea of the movements of the heart]. "*Fragments divers*," XCIII (Paris: Michel Lévy, 1857), 253. TSE likely encountered the phrase through Pound, who quotes it in "*The Serious Artist* (V)" (1913).

35. *Le Menteur* [*The Liar*] (1644) by Pierre Corneille is a comedy of mistaken identity based loosely on the Spanish play *La verdad sospechosa* [*The Suspicious Truth*] (1634) by Juan Ruiz de Alarcón.

36. Racine's only comedy, *Les Plaideurs* [*The Litigants*] (1669), based on Aristophanes' *The Wasps* (422 BC).

37. Implied in Phèdre's question to Hippolyte in Racine's *Phèdre* (II.v.645) – "What were you doing then?," that is, when his father first arrived in Crete – is her desire to have married him while he was still a boy. In TSE's second quotation, Cleopatra questions her lover Mark Antony about "the married woman," his Roman wife Fulvia, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, I.iii.21.

38. *Trans*: When I think about it, our love does not always esteem very highly the beloved; it is more often a criticism of the one who is in love; I know it all too well. Our vanity and our flirtatiousness, these are the greatest sources of our passions; it is from them that men often draw all their worth. He who would take away the weaknesses of our heart would hardly leave us with any admirable qualities. This small room where I was hidden while Damis was talking to you, well, take that away from my story, and perhaps I would not have been in love at all; why do I love? Because I was challenged to be found pleasing, and I wanted to save face; isn't that a fine origin for tenderness? That is however what another little room has produced in my story. *Les Serments Indiscrets*, V.ii. *Théâtre*, ed. Faguet, 2.107-8.

39. Both of Marivaux's novels of sensibility, *La Vie de Marianne* [*The Life of Marianne*] (1731-41), a copy of which is in TSE's library, and *Le Paysan parvenu* [*The Fortunate Peasant*] (1735-36), were left unfinished.

The New Elizabethans and the Old[1]

A review of *The New Elizabethans: A First Selection of the Lives of Young Men Who Have Fallen in the Great War*, by E. B. Osborn

London: John Lane, 1919. Pp. xxi + 311.

The Athenaeum, 4640 (4 Apr 1919) 134-36

At the beginning of the *Theaetetus* Plato gives the whole effect, the tone, of youthful promise slain in battle. Theaetetus is brought home from Corinth dying of "the disease prevalent in the army." One of the friends through whom the event is reported recalls the fact that Socrates, shortly before his death, met and conversed with the boy Theaetetus and prophesied great things of him "if he lived long enough."[2] The mood of regret over youth (untimely nipped) has been, like most of the moods of thought, perfectly expressed by Plato. It is a mood which gives pleasure to a great many people. But when it is drawn out to the length of a book, extended and repeated in some twenty figures, and elevated almost to a philosophy of life, it is a different matter. To observe that Plato has said all that there is to say, or to remark that Mr. Osborn has omitted one dead soldier who was a real poet – T. E. Hulme – is not to derogate from the memory of these young men.[3] They had charm. Most of them wrote verse, quite mediocre juvenile verse; and their literary interest appears to be one of the principles of selection. But their work is hardly more than a means of exploiting their charm, and in the charm is the danger.

The truth is that when one tries to work the subject beyond the point at which Plato has left it, one quickly reaches a point where further exposure becomes improper. There is a great difference of taste between memories of forward youth kept alive in the thoughts of a family and near friends, and the same memories warmed up to feed the public. It is all the difference between emotion and sentiment. One test is this, that Mr. Osborn, in his character sketches, has found himself, perhaps unconsciously, forced to maintain the tone of personal acquaintance. He makes no claim to have known all the young men personally. But his tone, in every case, is the tone suitable to a personal admirer. "I have chiefly," he says, "relied upon the opinions, written or communicated in conversation, of the younger

generation" [xi]. Apart from quotation and reference he frequently writes like this:

> He preferred a few close friends to a multitude of acquaintances, having that rare genius for friendship which is a characteristic of all strong influential personalities. [89]

Overlooking the question of the universality of the truth propounded in the last clause, we may at least complain that this sentence, written about a young Scotchman of very attractive features, is too soft and vague to give any historical impression of the hero.[4] It sounds like a letter of condolence from the commanding officer. The letter might be the expression of genuine feeling; but such a sentence in a biographical study is merely sentiment.

As for the subjects of these memoirs, we are quite prepared to believe that they were delightful persons, and that their loss is a public misfortune. Without question. They were not more sentimental than most young men, and they were not all of one type. Dixon Scott, for instance, who was probably a very efficient Extension lecturer and is praised as a critic, is of a very different species from Gerald and Julian Grenfell.[5] Three were Americans. Some were Oxford intelligentsia. Brian Brooke, whose peculiar ambitions make him more interesting than the majority, was a settler in East Africa. He was called Kurongo (strong man) by his neighbours, who adopted him into their tribe.[6] He was a genuine explorer in temperament, having (as we infer) that particular matter-of-fact romanticism which is proper to explorers and adventurers. None of the heroes, if we may judge from the verse and prose extracts from their works, was favoured with remarkable genius (unless what is called the "genius for living"). It would be unfair to expect any new revelation of life from any of these short careers. Important truth comes to the young only in rare flashes of genius. There are no flashes; some of the men had a nice honesty in detail, in accounting for their lives in France – but not that great honesty of the general scheme, that superhuman honesty which is realized only by years of observation and thought and which constitutes the genius of middle age.

Thus the young American Alan Seeger (whose poems were pleasantly edited by Mr. William Archer) seems to us to have lived always in a violet mist.[7] The Paris of his verse – he lived in Paris – might be the Paris of a performance of *Louise* at the Boston Opera-House.[8] His descriptions are accurate enough:

> The winter morning dawns with grey skies and the hoarfrost on the fields. His feet are numb, his canteen frozen, but he is not allowed to make a fire. The winter night falls, with its prospect of sentry duty, and the continual apprehension of the hurried call to arms; he is not even permitted to light a candle, but must fold himself in his blanket and lie down cramped in the dirty straw to sleep as best he may. How different from the popular notion of the evening campfire, the songs and good cheer! [156]

But how general it is, how deficient in significant detail! Vision is significant detail, particularity of movement, sensation, thought. We need not go to so great an authority as the writer of the *Chartreuse de Parme*.[9] Sir Walter Raleigh, writing of the sea fight off Cadiz, says that the Spanish ships . . .

> let slip, and ran aground, tumbling into the sea heaps of soldiers, as thick as if coals had been poured out of a sack in many ports at once, some drowned and some sticking in the mud.

Raleigh was well over forty.[10]

We are a little wearied, in fact, by the solemnity with which Mr. Osborn accepts the youthful mind and the youthful point of view. "Youth knows more about the young," he says, "than old age or middle age" [xi]. If this were so, civilization would be impossible, experience worthless. *Hommes de la trentaine, de la quarantaine*, assert yourselves.[11] Sympathy with youth is life; but acceptance of youth at its own valuation is sentiment; it is indifference to serious living. It leads to a pose, a form, from which certainly many of these young men were quite free: an idealization of actions and emotions, as contrasted with an interest in knowing what the world is like. So a young dragoon, of literary interests, exclaims about war:

> It is all *the* best fun. I have never felt so well, or so happy, or enjoyed anything so much. It just suits my stolid health and stolid nerves and barbaric disposition. The fighting-excitement vitalizes everything, every sight and word and action. One loves one's fellow-man so much more when one is bent on killing him. [295]

As a fancy of a very young man, this may be allowed to pass. What is intolerable is Mr. Osborn's comment:

> This, the mystical way of looking at war, is the right way; for war is a form of mysticism in action. [295]

It may be the mystical way, for mystical may be almost anything.

It is not noticeably the Elizabethan way. The Elizabethans were not always consistent or self-critical people; but their vice was rhetoric, not sentiment; it disfigured their expression, but did not affect their minds. Indeed, there are several misconceptions about Elizabethans. They were not, in any surprising number, all-round amateurs, as Mr. Osborn seems to imply. Sidney is mentioned – the poet, the courtier, the novelist, the soldier, the aristocrat. Sidney's mother's family was much better than his father's; and he wrote endlessly about the glories of his house.[12] He wrote one of the dullest novels in the language, and many of his sonnets are models of frigidity; his essay on poetry contains no distinguished and many questionable ideas.[13] He was saved by an anecdote, to be nominated a master of English prose; and as no one reads Nashe, or Lancelot Andrewes, or Martin Marprelate, the impression is very strong that Elizabethan prose is very bad.[14] *Christ is no wild-cat*, said Bishop Andrewes.[15] Raleigh is a different matter. He is almost the only Elizabethan, in Mr. Osborn's sense, who could occasionally write well. When he had a subject from his own experience, or for the benefit of which he could draw upon his own experience – as in his account of Cadiz, of the fight of the *Revenge*, or the travels in Guiana – he could write without the vices of his age; and in his *History* he sometimes adumbrates the latinity of Gibbon.[16] His last verses are an excellent amateur production. But Raleigh, who lived to a mature age, has not the New Elizabethan tone. He was simply a man of immense vitality who was interested in a number of things, and in a grand way.

The virtues of the New Elizabethans, in point of fact, are not so much the virtues of the Elizabethans as they are the ideals of the Victorians. The difference is as great as that between Malory and Tennyson. There was a reaction after the nineties. After the Wilde period came the Rupert Brooke period. It was a continuation of the former – neither Wilde nor Brooke was really an artist, and both betray a certain vulgarity – and it was also a reversion to the previous period – to the idyllic, to the beauties of the country, fresh air, tramping with a knapsack.[17] It produced a wide diffusion of verse-writing. The heroism displayed, and the genuine qualities of charm, were not manifestations of any particular period. The literature produced was very much of the period; it was not Elizabethan, and it was not good writing. To a person of any real feeling, the heroes might have been all the more interesting had they been less articulate.

NOTES

1. Composed after 12 Mar, when TSE told Edgar Jepson, "I have just been given a decadent work of sentiment on the 'New Elizabethans' which makes me feel that some of the sewers of the elder period ought to be aired" (*L1* 328). E. B. Osborn (1867-1938), writer and literary editor of the *Morning Post*, had also published *The Muse in Arms: A Collection of War Poems* (1917).

2. TSE quotes from his edition of *The Theaetetus of Plato*, ed. Lewis Campbell (Oxford: Clarendon, 1883). Campbell's note to the original Greek text translates the line as TSE gives it above and draws particular attention to it (3). In the dialogue's opening scene, Euclides reports that the young Theaetetus is suffering gravely from battle wounds and dysentery.

3. Hulme fell in action near Nieuport in Flanders on 28 Sept 1917. In July 1919, TSE wrote to Mary Hutchinson: "Hulme is a really great poet . . . I can't think of anything as good as two of his poems since Blake" (*L1* 371).

4. Robert William Sterling (1893-1915), author of *The Burial of Socrates* (1914), winner of Oxford's Newdigate Prize, was a King Charles Scholar at Pembroke College, Oxford, and a lieutenant in the Royal Scots Fusiliers who fell in action near Ypres on 23 Apr 1915. Osborn includes a photograph of him and writes that he "seemed to have ridden to Oxford out of an age of gleaming breastplates and tossing love-locks" (89).

5. Writer and journalist Dixon Scott (1881-1915), critic and columnist for *The Liverpool Courier*, was a lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery and died of dysentery on 23 Oct 1915 in Gallipoli; his posthumous volume of essays, *Men of Letters* (1916), won the praise of G. B. Shaw and Max Beerbohm. Julian Grenfell (1888-1915), author of *Into Battle: Verses* (1915) and a captain in the Royal Dragoons, was wounded by a shell at Ypres and died in the military hospital in Boulogne on 26 May. His younger brother, Gerald Grenfell (1890-1915), fell on 30 July near Hooge.

6. A captain in the Gordon Highlanders, Brian Brooke (1889-1916) – whose verse appeared in the South African newspaper *The Leader* and then in the posthumous collection *Poems* (1916) – fell at Mametz in July 1916. Osborn reports that Brooke's ambition to settle in the British colonies led to severe preparations, like refusing to sleep indoors for two years and wandering the countryside disguised as a vagrant piper. He was welcomed in British East Africa, Osborn writes, and given a tribal name by the Massai.

7. Poet and war correspondent Alan Seeger was killed in action at Belloy-en-Santerre on 4 July 1916; TSE knew him at Harvard and reviewed his posthumously published *Poems* (1916) in *The Egoist* (1.619).

8. TSE likely saw the opera *Louise* (1900), a melodramatic tale set in Bohemian Paris by French composer Gustave Charpentier (1860-1956), between Dec 1912, when the Boston Opera House added it to its French repertory, and the summer of 1914, when he left for Europe. *The Daily Globe* reviewer remarked "the beauty and atmospheric qualities" of the Boston performance (19 Dec 1912), 1.

9. Stendhal, author of *The Charterhouse of Parma* (1839), whom TSE praised for his mastery of visual detail and presentation in "The Hawthorne Aspect" (1.739).

10. Sir Walter Ralegh (also Raleigh) (1554-1618) was forty-two and had seen a long military career by the time he wrote his firsthand account of the raid against the Spanish forces at Cadiz in southwestern Spain; it was published by his grandson as *A Relation of Cadiz Action* (1699). *The Works of Sir Walter Ralegh*, vol VIII (Oxford UP, 1829), 672; TSE may have used the

account that Edmund Gosse quotes in his *Raleigh* (1886), which differs slightly from that which is printed in the *Works* (*read*: "came aground," "so thick").

11. *Trans*: Men in your thirties, men in your forties.

12. Philip Sidney's mother, Lady Mary Dudley (ca. 1530-86), was the eldest daughter of John Dudley, the Duke of Northumberland and a Tudor general; his father, Sir Henry Sidney (1529-86), Lord Deputy of Ireland, was notorious for the execution of 700 defeated soldiers in Southern Ireland. The family lived at the manor of Pembroke in Kent, which Sidney celebrates in the two versions of *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* (1590, 1593). TSE quips about Sidney's aristocracy in "A Cooking Egg," which appeared in *Coterie* (May 1919) a month after this review: "I shall not want Honour in Heaven / For I shall meet Sir Philip Sidney / And have talk with Coriolanus / And other heroes of that kidney" (*CPP* 27).

13. TSE refers to the two versions of *Arcadia*, the sonnet sequence *Astrophel and Stella* (1591), and the essay *The Defence of Poesie* (1595).

14. The anecdote is likely that which is related by Fulke Greville in his *Life of Sir Philip Sidney* (1652). Lying fatally wounded at the Battle of Zutphen on 22 Sept 1586, Sidney reportedly refused the bottle of water that had been brought to him and offered it instead to a nearby wounded soldier, saying, "Thy necessity is yet greater than mine" (Oxford: Clarendon, 1907), 130. "Martin Marprelate" was the pen name for the anonymous authors of the seven satirical "Marprelate Tracts" (1588-89), printed in secret and aimed at criticizing the Anglican Episcopacy. Thomas Nashe (1567-1601) collaborated on the anti-Martin Marprelate tract *An Almond for a Parrot* (1590).

15. TSE incorporated a version of this line from the 1622 Nativity Sermon of Lancelot Andrewes (1555-1626), Bishop of Winchester, in "Gerontion" (1920): "In the juvescence of the year / Came Christ the tiger" (*CPP* 21). Sermon XV in the edition that TSE owned, *Seventeen Sermons on the Nativity* (London: Griffith, Farran, Okeden & Welsh, 1887), 254.

16. In addition to his *A Relation of Cadiz Action*, Ralegh's accounts appeared in *A Report of the Truth of the fight about the Iles of Acores* (1591) and *The Discoverie of the Large, Rich, and Bewtiful Empyre of Guiana* (1595) and in the five-volume *History of the World* (1614).

17. Brooke was a member of the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve and died at sea of blood poisoning on 23 Apr 1915; his *1914 and Other Poems* was published posthumously in 1915.

The Post-Georgians

A review of *Wheels: A Third Cycle*, ed. Edith Sitwell

Oxford: Blackwell, 1918. Pp. 103.

The Athenaeum, 4641 (11 Apr 1919) 171-72

If we are passionately devoted to good literature, we look for individuals; but people who are keen on literature look for groups. They are easier to find, easier to talk about, and their multiplied activity is more inspiriting to watch than the silent struggles of a single man. Within limits, a group is even a useful thing. Its purpose and justification is advertisement; and the best work requires the best advertisement; and a dozen people can attract more attention together than dispersedly; and if they can attract enough attention, some of them may be able to make a living. But when writers gather together not for advertisement, or forget that it is for advertisement, and believe that they really like each other's company between covers, then their souls or the actualities of their bodies are in danger. They come to resemble each other more and more, and, like members of a family in old age, they become simply instances of a type. All that is now left of the Georgian Poets is what we may call the family features.[1]

Wheels, *qua* anthology, has assuredly made an impression from the start.[2] It somehow or other, and without the actual accomplishment of any of the performers exciting much astonishment, indicated that an hour had struck, a mode had passed, that a new fashion had arrived. The new fashion was not in all respects so very new, but the most unexpected, and therefore the newest mode is to take the last but one and remake it. So the daffodil and the rainbow and the cuckoo were to be put away, and the Harlequinades of the harlotry players and the Columbines of Verlaine and Symons to be had out again.[3] We are all relieved from a certain tension, as at the accession of Charles II.[4] *Wheels* affected us as the painted furniture at Messrs. Heal's affected those who were weary of the furniture of William Morris, and as the furniture of Morris must have affected people coeval with Morris.[5] *Wheels* marked a change in fashion. *Vers libre* and Cubism already existed, but *Wheels* at least acknowledged the fact; it showed a willingness to experiment, a tolerance of various emotions, and a complete

indifference to simplicity. This last item is most important: for the previous literary mode had been wholly corrupted by simplicity.

Great simplicity is only won by an intense moment or by years of intelligent effort, or by both. It represents one of the most arduous conquests of the human spirit: the triumph of feeling and thought over the natural sin of language. The triumph may be of greater or less importance: in Gautier it is a triumph of technique –

> Le squelette était invisible
> Au temps heureux de l'art païen;[6]

in greater poets a triumph of simple vision –

> Dans l'hiver, la morte saison
> Lorsque les loups vivent de vent;[7]

or in Dante the

> Poi si rivolse, e parve di costoro
> Che corunno a Verona il drappo verde
> Per la campagna; e parve di coloro
> Quegli che vince e non colui che perde.[8]

Here the image and the syntax are quite simple: the feeling is infinitely complex. Simplicity is merely a means, a means of direct contact. It is a virtue of expression. Simplicity was not hard won by the Georgians, it was given them by the fairy, and so, securely simple in their hearts, they neglected the more pharisaical virtue of simplicity in expression. *Wheels*, by contrast, has stood on the side of intelligence. It recognized that there are some pretty complicated feelings in life, which are worth a little pains to express. None of its members has yet found the great simplicity. They have found a formula; the poets resemble each other too closely, and that is a pity because they do not really resemble each other at all.

Mr. James and Mr. Vines are negligible. Miss Tree becomes tiresome, and shows no gain in technique. Don Alvaro de Guevara's two small poems are not sufficient basis for searching criticism.[9] Mr. Huxley is one of the few younger poets who have written a few interesting poems, which express very well feelings characteristic of adolescence. But his exhibits in this *Wheels* threaten him – if not with the grave – at least with the Bloomsburial of his genius.[10] His French poem is a private exercise, like a set of upper-form hexameters. In his prose poems, which occupy the rest of his allotment, he

has made the mistake of going for a model to Laforgue instead of to Rimbaud.[11] The prose poem is an aberration which is only justified by absolute success. Mr. Osbert Sitwell is best when he is himself, and worst when he is most cyclical. "Clavichords" is a cyclical failure, but his "Youth and Age" and "This Generation" (allowing for some stilted phrasing in the latter) are much better stuff than that of the war poets. Mr. Sacheverell Sitwell can also be cyclical; his expression is at times exasperatingly formulated, yet he is probably the only one of these poets for whom it is worth while even to struggle toward simplicity of expression. He would appear on internal evidence to be the most dissatisfied with himself; he is tortured with verbiage, but out of the midst of it he suddenly hauls a good Elizabethan line. In his best poems there has always been an insight, a unit of vision; most often its grave is strewn with artificial flowers, but there has been a living thing. He is capable of something exceptional, to be won by infinite labour.

In a smaller way, Miss Edith Sitwell has arrived at more nearly perfect accomplishment than her brother. She is the only writer on whom the cyclical garments look well. She has, of course, her own vices. She has looked too long on modern painting: her colours are crude and exaggerated. The sun is very bright; the grass is very green, and dotted with red parasols and negroes. Her bird is the parrot, or perhaps macaw. There are weaknesses of technique: "twixt," "I fain," "did kill"; in two successive poems faces are in cubes; more than once the light is "sequined." Yet her coloured furniture is so cleverly done, at times, that we wonder whether she is not fully justified in doing nothing else,

> Flames, bright singing birds that pass,
> Whistled wares as shrill as grass
> (Landscapes clear as glittering glass).
> Whistled all together:
> Papagei, oh Papagei,
> Buy our greenest fruits, oh buy
> Melons misty from the gloom . . . .[12] [81]

> Sharp each bird tongue shrills and hisses,
> Parrot-voices shrieking bane;
> Down comes every spangled shutter
> With a sudden noise like rain. [82]

This is much better done than "Goblin Market."[13] Miss Sitwell can be depended upon, in work like this, never to be ridiculous. She is unusual among contemporaries in that she cannot fall into vulgarity or cheapness. Two or three of her poems have moments of a greater seriousness, but her success has hitherto been due to her deliberate choice of her own limitations.

Every one of the writers of *Wheels* must make a choice. They can either hang together, and make a small place for themselves in the history of literature by being the interesting fashion of a day, or they can choose to run the risk of being individuals. If they choose the former, they will live to see a new and perhaps worse fashion succeed theirs. If they will make the choice of standing each for himself, some of them will instantly disappear in oblivion; the rest will have an opportunity of being lonely and unappreciated and above the possible mutations of public taste.

NOTES

1. Writing during the early reign of George V (1910-36), the forty so-called Georgian poets – including Lascelles Abercrombie, Rupert Brooke, John Drinkwater, Walter de la Mare, and others – appeared in a series of five anthologies between 1912 and 1922 titled *Georgian Poetry*, edited by Edward Marsh and published by Harold Monro at the Poetry Bookshop. TSE reviewed the third anthology (1917) in "Verse Pleasant and Unpleasant" (1.679).

2. Edith Sitwell edited the first volume of the annual *Wheels: An Anthology of Verse* in 1916, including a prefatory poem that satirized the Georgian poets for what she saw as their regional insularity and rustic simplicity; in "Verse Pleasant and Unpleasant," TSE reviewed *Wheels: A Second Cycle* (1917), which he called "refreshing after the schoolroom" of the Georgians (1.680).

3. Both Arthur Symons and Paul Verlaine, whose poems Symons translated, often wrote about the stock characters and situations of the Italian *commedia dell'arte* and its successor in eighteenth-century England, the Harlequinade, a pantomime performance involving the antics of Harlequin and Columbine. "Harlotry players" is Mistress Quickly's derogatory epithet for actors in *Henry IV, Part 1*, II.iv.391-92.

4. The accession of King Charles II (1630-85) on 23 Apr 1661 marked the restoration of the British monarchy after nearly a decade of Puritan rule and years of civil war and unrest.

5. The London furniture firm Heal & Son began manufacturing its own less expensive versions of Arts and Crafts style furniture – till then associated with William Morris's design and craftsmanship – in 1913 when Ambrose Heal became chairman. The Heal & Son shop was home to the Mansard Gallery – a showcase for avant-garde art that opened in 1917 on the top floor at 195 Tottenham Court Road – which TSE mentioned in the *Egoist* (1.724).

6. *Trans*: The skeleton was invisible / In the happy days of pagan art. Théophile Gautier, "Bûchers et Tombeaux" [Pyres and Tombs], *Émaux et Camées*. TSE may have drawn upon these lines for the beginning of "Whispers of Immortality" – "Webster was much possessed by death /

And saw the skull beneath the skin" (*CPP* 32) – which appeared recently in the *Little Review* (Sept 1918).

7. *Read*: "Sur le Noël, morte saison, / Lorsque les loups vivent de vent." *Trans*: "In the dead season before Christmas, when the wolves are sniffing the wind." From the second stanza of Villon's *Le Petit Testament. Poems of François Villon*, trans. H. de Vere Stacpoole (New York: John Lane, 1914), 74-75. Ezra Pound translated these lines in "Villonaud for This Yule" (1908).

8. *Inferno* XV.121-24. *Trans*: "Then he turned back, and seemed like one of those who run for the green cloth at Verona through the open field; and of them seemed like he who gains, not he who loses" (*DC1* 165); *read*: "parve di coloro / che corrono . . . per la campagna; e parve di costoro / quegli."

9. Among the contributors to *Wheels: A Third Cycle* were Arnold James (1878-1959), Walter Sherard Vines (1890-1974), Iris Tree (1897-1968), whom TSE called "the most mature of the lot," and Alvaro Velez Ladron de Guevara (1894-1951), who contributed "Two Fragments from the Spanish" (1.681).

10. Aldous Huxley was twenty-one when he met many members of the Bloomsbury group in 1915 at Lady Ottoline Morrell's Garsington Manor, where TSE was also a frequent guest. TSE previously characterized Huxley's susceptibility to influence as a sickness: "He has come down with a serious attack of Laforgue . . . and we must wait until he has worked it off" (1.681); Huxley's French poem to which he refers here is "Zoo Celeste."

11. TSE refers to the parodic prose in Laforgue's *Moralités légendaires* (1887); he praised the prose poems in Rimbaud's *Les Illuminations* (1886) for their perfection and precision in "The Borderline of Prose" (1.538-39).

12. *Read*: "misty from the bloom"

13. From the first part of Sitwell's "Sugar for the Birds," which TSE connects to the ghostly exhortations that begin Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market" (1862): "Maids heard the goblins cry: 'Come buy our orchard fruits, / Come buy, come buy.'"

American Literature

A review of *A History of American Literature*, vol. II ed. William P. Trent, John Erskine, Stuart P. Sherman, and Carl Van Doren

Cambridge UP, 1918. Pp. x + 658.

The Athenaeum, 4643 (25 Apr 1919) 236-37

This is Volume II of the American Supplement to the *Cambridge History of English Literature*. We look forward with gnawing curiosity to Volume III, wondering what it may contain besides the article on Brander Matthews which is apparently promised;[1] for Volume II brings us up through a chapter on "Books for Children." Did Professor Tassin of Columbia University, to whom this topic was allocated, warm to enthusiasm when he received his commission?[2] He has done his work well, and so have most of his colleagues. But the book has the effect, not of a history, but of a collection of scattered essays on the various fragments of American letters, done by men who did not collaborate, but worked apart, and each with his own aim and method.

It is inevitable that any work on American literature should contain a good deal of stuffing. The fault is not in the lack of material so much as in its lack of cohesion. There could be written a very instructive account of American Puritanism, with its interesting transition to Transcendentalism; but this would be a history not of American but of Boston literature, and it would turn out to be not so much a history of the brahminical canon of Boston literature as of Boston Society. The great figures of American literature are peculiarly isolated, and their isolation is an element, if not of their greatness, certainly of their originality. When we glance over the contents of most of the chapters we acquire some perception of how isolated the great figures are. Some of the subjects are too forbidding for any eye but that of the professional anthropologist – "Magazines, Annuals and Gift Books," "Familiar Verse," "Dialect Writers." Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, on Daniel Webster, tries hard to make something literary out of it.[3] He quotes from the "Bunker Hill Oration":

> Let it rise (i.e., the monument), let it rise till it meet the sun in his coming; let the earliest light of morning gild it, and parting day linger and play on its summit. [102]

Senator Lodge's comments follow:

> Here the thought is nothing, the style everything. No-one can repeat those words and be deaf to their music or insensible to the rhythm and beauty of the prose with the Saxon words relieved just sufficiently by the Latin derivatives. [102]

The comment needs no comment. Miss Putnam, on Prescott, remarks enthusiastically that the historian's wife "was a splendid comrade for her husband in the sheltered life that had to be his lot" [123].[4] She fails to draw any comparison between Prescott and Motley and European historians which might enable us to value the two Americans at their proper rate. Professor MacMechan's essay on Thoreau is good, but not written from any very fresh or surprising point of view.[5]

The three important men in the book are Poe, Whitman and Hawthorne. Professor Campbell, writing on Poe, makes his article turn on Poe's genuine and unappreciated merits as a critic.[6] It is not a point of vast importance, as most of the writers whom Poe criticized are embalmed only in their coffins and in Poe's abuse; but Poe's intellectual abilities should not be overlooked; he was the directest, the least pedantic, the least pedagogical of the critics writing in his time in either America or England. It is a pity that Professor Campbell fails to analyse Poe's peculiar originality as a poet. He perceives the relation of Poe to Byron, Moore and the Romantic movement in general, but misses observing that Poe is both the *reductio ad absurdum* and the artistic perfection of this movement.[7] Professor Holloway's article on Whitman tells of everything (including several interesting things) except his poetry.[8] Professor Erskine's "Hawthorne" is surely the most serious and intelligent essay in the volume.[9]

We must regret that this article is not supplemented elsewhere in the book by any coherent study of the society of which Hawthorne did not quite form a part. For this, Barrett Wendell's *Literary History of America* remains the best reference.[10] Such a supplement would be as useful to most Americans as to foreigners, inasmuch as in this context "foreigners" includes all Americans who are not New Englanders. Hawthorne was very much a New Englander, but he was not really a member of the

Transcendentalist group which clustered round Emerson. He was somewhat affected by it, but never engrossed in it. The reasons for his independence Mr. Erskine elicits with commendable skill. It is quite right to say of Hawthorne:

> He was no mystic . . . He was a philosophical experimenter, in whose method was no room for optimism or for prepossessions of any kind . . . He was really the questioner, the detached observer, that other Transcendentalists thought they were. [17]

Mr. Erskine also makes the point that

> if to be . . . interested in the soul is to be a psychologist, then Hawthorne was one . . . But if the term denotes attention to motives and to fine mental processes, to the anatomy . . . of character, then Hawthorne was no such psychologist as, let us say, Henry James. He studied no subtle character, nor any character subtly. He was a moralist rather than a psychologist. [18]

Neither Emerson nor any of the others was a real observer of the moral life. Hawthorne was, and was a realist. He had, also, what no one else in Boston had – the firmness, the true coldness, the hard coldness of the genuine artist. In consequence, the observation of moral life in the *Scarlet Letter*, in the *House of the Seven Gables*, and even in some of the tales and sketches, has solidity, has permanence, the permanence of art. It will always be of use; the essays of Emerson are already an encumbrance. The work of Hawthorne is truly a criticism – true because a fidelity of the artist and not a mere conviction of the man – of the Puritan morality, of the Transcendentalist morality, and of the world which Hawthorne knew. It is a criticism as Henry James's work is a criticism of the America of his times, and as the work of Turgenev and Flaubert is a criticism of the Russia and the France of theirs. Hawthorne had even the minor token of literary genius, the genius for titles, as "Endicott and the Red Cross," "The Wives of the Dead."[11]

Hawthorne is the only elder American who reached this critical greatness, and Hawthorne might have been greater – that is, more important – had he had a more important subject. Hawthorne, Poe and Whitman are all pathetic creatures; they are none of them so great as they might have been. But the lack of intelligent literary society is not responsible for their

shortcomings; it is much more certainly responsible for some of their merits. The *originality*, if not the full mental capability, of these men was brought out, forced out, by the starved environment. This originality gives them a distinction which some heavier-weight authors do not obtain. Compare "Ulalume" with "The Witch of Atlas" (or whatever poem of Shelley's seems more apposite), and Poe appears the more creative, the more distinguished.[12] Compare *Leaves of Grass* with *Dramatic Monologues*, and you see that Whitman is more creative, more original, more "shocking," in single lines, than Browning.[13] Compare the *Scarlet Letter* with *Adam Bede,* and the distinction, again, is on the side of Hawthorne.[14] What the Americans, in point of fact, did suffer from was the defect of society in the larger sense, not from exiguity of *intelligentsia – intelligentsia* would have spoiled their distinction. Their world was thin; it was not corrupt enough. Worst of all it was secondhand; it was not original and self-dependent – it was a shadow. Poe and Whitman, like bulbs in a glass bottle, could only exhaust what was in them. Hawthorne, more tentacular and inquisitive, sucked every actual germ of nourishment out of his granite soil; but the soil was mostly granite.

These reflections are probably alien to the point of view of the able university critics who have confected the present book, which is provided with an important and encyclopaedic bibliography.[15]

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. Playwright and Columbia University professor Brander Matthews (1852-1929) was the topic of a chapter in vol 3 (Cambridge UP, 1921), where he was praised for popularizing a philosophy of theater in America.

2. Algernon de Vivier Tassin (1869-1941), assistant professor at Columbia, author of *The Craft of the Tortoise* (1919) and *The Story of American Literature* (1923), an illustrated collection for young readers.

3. Historian and Republican senator Henry Cabot Lodge (1850-1924) was the author of *Daniel Webster* (1883), a biography of the influential Boston politician (1782-1852) who delivered the first of two Bunker Hill orations, "On the Laying of the Corner Stone of Bunker Hill Monument," in 1825.

4. Historian and biographer Ruth Putnam (1856-1931) relates that American historian William Hickling Prescott (1796-1859) was blinded by "a crust of bread thrown by one of a careless group of skylarking students," an accident that led to his sheltered life and greater dependence on his wife, Susan Amory Prescott (ca. 1799-1859) (123-24). The Eliot family library contained Prescott's three-volume *History of the Conquest of Mexico* (1843), which TSE asked his mother to save for him after his father died in Jan 1919 (*L1* 325).

5. Archibald McKellar MacMechan (1862-1933), Canadian professor at Dalhousie University.

6. University of Texas professor Killis Campbell (1872-1937) writes of Edgar Allan Poe (1809-49), "No other American critic of his day, save Lowell, may take rank above him" (63).

7. *reductio ad absurdum*: reduction to the absurd. Campbell calls Poe's earliest work "manifestly imitative" of Coleridge, Byron, Shelley and Thomas Moore (1779-1852), author of *Irish Melodies* (1808-34) and *Lalla Rookh: An Oriental Romance* (1817) (66); TSE expands on this account of Poe's place in the Romantic movement in "Israfel" (*Nation & Athenaeum*, 21 May 1927, 219).

8. Rufus Emory Holloway (1885-1977) was assistant professor at Adelphi College, Long Island, and later author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning biography, *Whitman: An Interpretation in Narrative* (1927).

9. Columbia University Professor John Erskine (1879-1951).

10. Professor Barrett Wendell (1855-1921), who taught at Harvard while TSE was a student there, discusses the outsider social status of Hawthorne's family, which had "long lapsed into that sort of obscurity which modern cant would call social degeneracy." *A Literary History of America* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900), 425.

11. "The Wives of the Dead" (1832) and "Endicott and the Red Cross" (1838) both first appeared in the illustrated annual *The Token* (1827-42).

12. Poe, "Ulalume" (1847); Shelley, "The Witch of Atlas" (1824).

13. Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (1855). TSE likely refers to Browning's *Dramatic Lyrics* (1842), which he assigned in his 1916-17 tutorial class (1.478).

14. TSE first read Eliot's *Adam Bede* (1859) while preparing for his course on Victorian literature in 1917-18. In Mar 1918, he wrote to his mother, "I have been cramming George Eliot for the last two weeks . . . I was surprised to enjoy her so much" (*L1* 251).

15. TSE had the opportunity to revisit this review in 1961, when American scholar B. R. McElderry, Jr., wrote a letter that included excerpts from it and requested his permission to reprint it in *American Literature* in response to a recent article there that had disparaged it. According to McElderry, TSE responded on 25 Apr 1962 "that he was so 'horrified' by the opinions in the excerpts I quoted that he had no desire to inspect the whole article in the files of the *Athenaeum*." McElderry, "T. S. Eliot on Poe," *Poe Newsletter*, 2 (Apr 1969), 33.

A Romantic Aristocrat[1]

It is impossible to overlook the merits of scholarship and criticism exhibited by George Wyndham's posthumous book,[2†] and it is impossible to deal with the book purely on its merits of scholarship and criticism. To attempt to do so would in the first place be unfair, as the book is a posthumous work, and posthumous books demand some personal attention to their writers.[3] This book is a collection of essays and addresses, arranged in their present order by Mr. Whibley; they were intended by their author to be remodelled into a volume on "romantic literature"; they move from an ingenious search for the date of the beginning of Romanticism, through the French and English Renaissance, to Sir Walter Scott.[4] In the second place, these essays represent the literary work of a man who gained his chief distinction in political life. In the third place, this man stands for a type, an English type. The type is interesting and will probably become extinct. It is natural, therefore, that our primary interest in the essays should be an interest in George Wyndham.

Mr. Charles Whibley, in an introduction the tone of which is well suited to the matter, has several sentences which throw light on Wyndham's personality. What issues with surprising clearness from Mr. Whibley's sketch is the unity of Wyndham's mind, the identity of his mind as it engaged in apparently unrelated occupations. Wyndham left Eton for the army; in barracks he "taught himself Italian, and filled his leisure with the reading of history and poetry" [vii]. After this Coldstream culture there was a campaign in Egypt;[5] later, service in South Africa accompanied by a copy of Virgil. There was a career in the Commons, a conspicuous career as Irish Secretary. Finally, there was a career as a landowner – 2400 acres. And throughout these careers George Wyndham went on not only accumulating books but reading them, and occasionally writing about them. He was a man of character, a man of energy. Mr. Whibley is quite credible when he says:

> Literature was for him no parergon, no mere way of escape from politics. If he was an amateur in feeling, he was a craftsman in execution;[6] [xxxv]

and, more significantly,

> With the same zest that he read and discoursed upon *A Winter's Tale* or *Troilus and Cressida*, he rode to hounds, or threw himself with a kind of fury into a "point to point," or made a speech at the hustings, or sat late in the night talking with a friend. [viii]

From these and other sentences we chart the mind of George Wyndham, and the key to its topography is the fact that his literature and his politics and his country life are one and the same thing. They are not in separate compartments, they are one career. Together they made up his world: literature, politics, riding to hounds. In the real world these things have nothing to do with each other. But we cannot believe that George Wyndham lived in the real world. And this is implied in Mr. Whibley's remark that:

> George Wyndham was by character and training a romantic. He looked with wonder upon the world as upon a fairyland. [xv]

Here is the manifestation of type.

There must probably be conceded to history a few "many-sided" men. Perhaps Leonardo da Vinci was such. George Wyndham was not a man on the scale of Leonardo, and his writings give a very different effect from Leonardo's notebooks. Leonardo turned to art or science, and each was what it was and not another thing. But Leonardo was Leonardo: he had no father to speak of, he was hardly a citizen, and he had no stake in the community.[7] He lived in no fairyland, but his mind went out and became a part of things. George Wyndham was Gentry. He was chivalrous, the world was an adventure of himself. It is characteristic that on embarking as a subaltern for Egypt he wrote enthusiastically:

> I do not suppose that any expedition since the days of Roman governors of provinces has started with such magnificence; we might have been Antony going to Egypt in a purple-sailed galley. [vii]

This is precisely the spirit which animates his appreciation of the Elizabethans and of Walter Scott; which guides him toward Hakluyt and North.[8] Wyndham was enthusiastic, he was a Romantic, he was an Imperialist, and he was quite naturally a literary pupil of W. E. Henley.[9] Wyndham was a scholar, but his scholarship is incidental; he was a good critic, within the range allowed him by his enthusiasms; but it is neither as Scholar nor as Critic that we can criticize him. We can criticize his writings only as the expression of this peculiar English type, the aristocrat, the

Imperialist, the Romantic, riding to hounds across his prose, looking with wonder upon the world as upon a fairyland.

Because he belongs to this type, Wyndham wrote enthusiastically and well about North's Plutarch.[10] The romance of the ancient world becomes more romantic in the idiomatic prose of North; the heroes are not merely Greek and Roman heroes, but Elizabethan heroes as well; the romantic fusion allured Wyndham. The charms of North could not be expounded more delightfully, more seductively, with more gusto, than they are in Wyndham's essay. He appreciates the battles, the torchlight, the "dead sound" of drums, the white, worn face of Cicero in his flight peering from his litter; he appreciates the sharp brusque phrase of North: "he roundly trussed them up and hung them by their necks."[11] And Wyndham is learned. Here, as in his essays on the Pléiade and Shakespeare, the man has read everything, with a labour that only whets his enjoyment of the best. There are two defects: a lack of balance and a lack of critical profundity. The lack of balance peeps through Wyndham's condemnation of an obviously inferior translation of Plutarch: "He dedicated the superfluity of his leisure to enjoyment, and used his Lamia," says the bad translator.[12] North: "he took pleasure of Lamia" [205]. Wyndham makes a set upon the bad translator. But he forgets that "dedicated the superfluity of his leisure" is such a phrase as Gibbon would have warmed to life and wit, and that a history, in the modern sense, could not be written in the style of North.[13] Wyndham forgets, in short, that it is not, in the end, periods and traditions but individual men who write great prose. For Wyndham is himself a period and a tradition.

The lack of balance is to be suspected elsewhere. Wyndham *likes* the best, but he likes a good deal. There is no conclusive evidence that he realized all the difference, the gulf of difference between lines like:

> En l'an trentiesme de mon aage
> Que toutes mes hontes j'ay beues;[14]

and even the very best of Ronsard or Bellay, such as:

> Le temps s'en va, le temps s'en va, madame;
> Las! le temps, non, mais nous nous en allons
> Et tost serons estendus sous la lame.[15]

We should not gather from Wyndham's essay that the *Phoenix and Turtle* is a great poem, far finer than *Venus and Adonis*; but what he says about *Venus*

and Adonis is worth reading, for Wyndham is very sharp in perceiving the neglected beauties of the second-rate.[16] There is nothing to show the gulf of difference between Shakespeare's sonnets and those of any other Elizabethan. Wyndham overrates Sidney, and in his references to Elizabethan writings on the theory of poetry omits mention of the essay by Campion, an abler and more daring though less common-sense study than Daniel's.[17] He speaks a few words for Drayton, but has not noticed that the only good lines (with the exception of one sonnet which may be an accident) in Drayton's dreary sequence of *Ideas* occur when Drayton drops his costume for a moment and talks in terms of actuality:

> Lastly, mine eyes amazedly have seen
> Essex' great fall; Tyrone his peace to gain;
> The quiet end of that long-living queen;
> The king's fair entry, and our peace with Spain.[18]

More important than the lack of balance is the lack of critical analysis. Wyndham had, as was indicated, a gusto for the Elizabethans. His essay on the Poems of Shakespeare contains an extraordinary amount of information. There is some interesting gossip about Mary Fitton and a good anecdote of Sir William Knollys.[19] But Wyndham misses what is the cardinal point in criticizing the Elizabethans: we cannot grasp them, understand them, without some understanding of the pathology of rhetoric. Rhetoric, a particular form of rhetoric, was endemic, it pervaded the whole organism; the healthy as well as the morbid tissues were built up on it. We cannot grapple with even the simplest and most conversational lines in Tudor and early Stuart drama without having diagnosed the rhetoric in the sixteenth and seventeenth-century mind. Even when we come across lines like:

> There's a plumber laying pipes in my guts, it scalds,[20]

we must not allow ourselves to forget the rhetorical basis any more than when we read:

> Come, let us march against the powers of heaven
> And set black streamers in the firmament
> To signify the slaughter of the gods.[21]

An understanding of Elizabethan rhetoric is as essential to the appreciation of Elizabethan literature as an understanding of Victorian

sentiment is essential to the appreciation of Victorian literature and of George Wyndham.

Wyndham was a Romantic; the only cure for Romanticism is to analyse it. What is permanent and good in Romanticism is curiosity –

> . . . l'ardore
> Ch' i' ebbe a divenir del mondo esperto
> E degli vizii umani e del valore – [22]

a curiosity which recognizes that any life, if accurately and profoundly penetrated, is interesting and always strange. Romanticism is a short cut to the strangeness without the reality, and it leads its disciples only back upon themselves. George Wyndham had curiosity, but he employed it romantically, not to penetrate the real world, but to complete the varied features of the world he made for himself. It would be of interest to divagate from literature to politics and inquire to what extent Romanticism is incorporate in Imperialism; to inquire to what extent Romanticism has possessed the imagination of Imperialists, and to what extent it was made use of by Disraeli.[23] But this is quite another matter: there may be a good deal to be said for Romanticism in life, there is no place for it in letters. Not that we need conclude that a man of George Wyndham's antecedents and traditions must inevitably be a Romanticist writer. But this is the case when such a man plants himself firmly in his awareness of caste, when he says "The gentry must not abdicate."[24] In politics this may be an admirable formula. It will not do in literature. The Arts insist that a man shall dispose of all that he has, even of his family tree, and follow art alone. For they require that a man be not a member of a family or of a caste or of a party or of a coterie, but simply and solely himself. A man like Wyndham brings several virtues into literature. But there is only one man better and more uncommon than the patrician, and that is the Individual.

NOTES

1. As printed in *SW*, where it was incorporated into the essay "Imperfect Critics" as the second of five parts, three of which had been previously published; for a list of the contents of "Imperfect Critics," see "Swinburne as Critic" (119, n.1). "A Romantic Aristocrat" appeared originally as "A Romantic Patrician," *The Athenaeum*, 4644 (2 May 1919), 265-67, a review of *Essays in Romantic Literature* by George Wyndham, ed. Charles Whibley. London: Macmillan, 1919. Pp. xliii + 438. The *Ath* version was finished before 23 Apr, when editor John Middleton Murry wrote to congratulate him, "How *very good* is your essay on Wyndham!" (*L1* 339).

2†. In *Ath*: "exhibited by this book"

3. English politician George Wyndham (1863-1913) died suddenly from a blood clot on 8 June 1913; known for his introduction to North's *Plutarch*, he was formerly a conservative member of Parliament who spoke in defense of British imperial policy and was appointed chief secretary of Ireland in 1900.

4. English author and journalist Charles Whibley (1859-1930) knew Wyndham through the circle of writers who met at the London home of W. E. Henley and wrote for the conservative weekly, the *National Observer*; he later became a close friend of TSE and a valued contributor to the *Criterion*.

5. "Coldstream culture": the Coldstream Guards is the oldest regiment in the British Army.

6. TSE translates the Greek "πάρεργον" (parergon), which Whibley gives in the original.

7. Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) was born the illegitimate son of a Florence notary, worked for decades in Milan, and died in France. As the 2 May 1919 issue of the *Athenaeum* coincided with the quatercentenary of Leonardo's death, editor John Middleton Murry prefaced the issue with an essay extolling his virtues, "The First European" (261-62).

8. In the lecture that concludes the *Essays*, Wyndham writes that Scott's "worth as a man excels his work as an author. It is an example of valour to all men, in all lands, for ever" (438); he admires Elizabethan writer and geographer Richard Hakluyt (1552-1616), primarily for what he reveals about "our national attitude towards national endeavour" (391); and he applauds English translator of Plutarch, Thomas North (1535-1601), for "his insistence . . . on all things gentle and brave" (214).

9. TSE owned a 1905 edition of *Poems* (1898) by William Ernest Henley, who was editor of the *National Observer* and an advocate, like Wyndham, of British imperialism.

10. Wyndham calls North's translation one of "the world's greatest books in great English prose" (235).

11. TSE modernizes these lines from North's translation of Plutarch's "The Life of Fabius Maximus," which Wyndham gives thus: "he 'roundely trussed them up and honge them by the neckes'" (216).

12. Wyndham quotes from the translation of Plutarch's "Comparison of Demetrius and Antonius" by Aubrey Stewart and George Long in *Lives* (London: Bell, 1880-82), 4: 349.

13. English historian Edward Gibbon (1737-94); in a letter to Mary Hutchinson two months after this review appeared, TSE wrote, "at present I only read Tudor drama, Tudor prose, and Gibbon – over and over – when I have time to read at all" (*L1* 379).

14. *Trans*: "In the year thirty of my age, / Wherein I've drunk so deep of shame." *The Poems of Master François Villon of Paris*, trans. John Payne (London: Reeves & Turner, 1881). TSE appended these opening lines of François Villon's *Le Testament* (also known as *Le Grand Testament* or *Le Testament second*, 1461) as the epigraph to "A Cooking Egg" in *Ara Vos Prec* (1920), though they were absent when the poem was published in *Coterie* the day before this review appeared.

15. *Trans*: "Time passes swift, my love, ah! swift it flies! / Yet no – Time passes not, but we – we pass, / And soon shall lie outstretched beneath a stone." Pierre de Ronsard, "Je vous envoye un bouquet" [I send to you a nosegay] (1572). *Songs & Sonnets*, trans. Curtis Hidden Page (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1903), 76. TSE quotes from a modernized edition; *read*: "Le tems s'en va, le tems s'en va, ma Dame; / Las! les tems non." Ronsard (1524-85) was the leading member of the *Pléiade*, a Renaissance literary school devoted to classical forms and creative imitation; TSE

told Richard Aldington that he preferred the work of Joachim du Bellay, who contributed the group's manifesto *La Défense et illustration de la langue française* in 1549 (*L1* 607).

16. Shakespeare, "The Phoenix and the Turtle" (1601). About *Venus and Adonis* (1593), Wyndham observes, "The laughter and sorrow of the Poem belong wholly to the faery world of vision and romance, where there is no sickness, whether of sentiment or sense. And both are rendered by images, clean-cut as in antique gems, brilliantly enamelled as in mediaeval chalices" (323).

17. Two treatises on the art of poetry by contemporaries Thomas Campion (1567-1620), *Observations in the Art of English Poesie* (1602), and Samuel Daniel (1562-1619), *A Defence of Ryme* (1603).

18. From sonnet 51 ("Calling to mind since first my love begun") by Michael Drayton (1563-1631). Drayton began the sonnet sequence *Idea* in 1594 and published the final version in the 1619 folio edition of his early poems, *Poems by Michael Drayton Esquyer*.

19. Once considered a candidate for Shakespeare's "Dark Lady," Mary Fitton (ca. 1578-1641) was a maid of honor to the Court of Elizabeth I when she entered into an affair with Lord William Herbert and bore him an illegitimate son. Participating in a court masque, Wyndham relates, a costumed Fitton approached the queen and invited her to join the dance: "her Majesty asked what she was; *Affection*, she said. Affection! Said the Queen. *Affection* is false" (275).

Sir William Knollys (1545-1632), First Earl of Banbury (and Elizabeth I's cousin), lost his patience, according to a contemporary account that Wyndham relates, with a group of unruly maids and "at last he getts in one night at their revells, stripps off his shirt, and so with a payre of spectacles on his nose . . . comes marching in at a posterne door of his owne chamber, reading very gravely, full upon the faces of them" (281). Wyndham quotes from Sir Nicholas L'Estrange's seventeenth-century collection of anecdotes, *Merry Passages and Jests*.

20. Webster, *The White Devil* (1612), V.vi.143.

21. Christopher Marlowe (1564-93), *Tamburlaine the Great* (1590), Part II, V.iii.48-50.

22. *Inferno* XXVI. 97-99. *Trans*: "the ardour that I had to gain experience of the world, and of human vice and worth" (*DC1* 293); the shade of Ulysses declares his motivation for leaving Ithaca to embark on a second voyage not long after his return from Troy. *Read*: "ch' i' ebbi"; slightly misquoted in *Ath* ("Che i ebbe," "divin[i]r"); corrected in *SW*.

23. During his two terms as prime minister (1874-80), Benjamin Disraeli was a stalwart proponent of British imperialism and territorial expansion.

24. Whibley quotes from Wyndham's correspondence and remarks: "There was his creed in a phrase: 'The Gentry of England must not abdicate,' for the very reason that the gentry had its roots in the past, that it received from the past its duties and its privileges" (xxxvi).

Kipling Redivivus

A review of *The Years Between*, by Rudyard Kipling

London: Methuen, 1919. Pp. xiii + 159.

The Athenaeum, 4645 (9 May 1919) 297-98

Mr. Kipling is a laureate without laurels. He is a neglected celebrity. The arrival of a new book of his verse is not likely to stir the slightest ripple on the surface of our conversational intelligentsia. He has not been crowned by the elder generation; malevolent fate has not even allowed him to be one of the four or five or six greatest living poets. A serious contemporary has remarked of the present volume that "in all, or nearly all, our poetical coteries the poetry of Kipling has long been anathema, with field sports, Imperialism, and public schools."[1] This is wide of the mark. Mr. Kipling is not anathema; he is merely not discussed. Most of our discerning critics have no more an opinion on Mr. Kipling than they have on the poetry of Mr. John Oxenham.[2] The mind is not sufficiently curious, sufficiently brave, to examine Mr. Kipling. Yet the admired creator of Bouvard and Pécuchet would not have overlooked the Kipling *dossier*.[3]

Mr. Kipling has not been analysed. There are the many to whom he is a gospel; there are the few to whom he is a shout in the street, or a whisper in the ear of death, unheard.[4] Both are mistaken. Mr. Kipling is not without antecedents; he has an affinity to Swinburne, even a likeness. There are, of course, qualities peculiar to Mr. Kipling; but several of the apparent differences are misconceptions, and several can be reduced to superficial differences of environment. Both are men of a few simple ideas, both are preachers, both have marked their styles by an abuse of the English Bible.

They are alike even in a likeness which would strike most people immediately as a difference; they are alike in their use of sound. It is true that Swinburne relies more exclusively upon the power of sound than does Mr. Kipling. But it is the same type of sound, and it is not the sound-value of music. Anyone who thinks so may compare Swinburne's "songs" with verse which demands the voice and the instrument, with Shelley's "Music when soft voices die" or Campion's "Fairy queen Proserpina."[5] What emerges

from the comparison is that Swinburne's sound like Mr. Kipling's, has the sound-value of oratory, not of music.

When the hounds of spring are on winter's traces[6]

arrives at similar effects to Mr. Kipling:

What are the bugles blowin' for? said Files on Parade;[7]

or in the present volume:

There was no need of a steed nor [*sic*] a lance to pursue them;
It was decreed their own deed, and not chance, should undo them[8]

It is, in fact, the poetry of oratory; it is music just as the words of orator or preacher are music; they persuade, not by reason, but by emphatic sound. Swinburne and Mr. Kipling have, like the public speaker, an idea to impose; and they impose it in the public speaker's way, by turning the idea into sound, and iterating the sound. And, like the public speaker's, their business is not to express, to lay before you, to *state*, but to propel, to impose on you the idea. And, like the orator, they are personal: not by revelation, but by throwing themselves in and gesturing the emotion of the moment. The emotion is not "there" simply, coldly independent of the author, of the audience, there and for ever like Shakespeare's and Aeschylus' emotions: it is present so long only as the author is on the platform and compels you to feel it.

I look down at his feet: but that's a fable.
If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee.[9]

is "there," cold and indifferent.

Nothing is better, I well think,
Than love; the hidden well-water
Is not so delicate a drink.
This was well seen of me and her[10]

(to take from one of Swinburne's poems which most nearly resembles a statement); or

The end of it's sitting and thinking
And dreaming hell-fires to see – [11]

these are not statements of emotion, but ways of stimulating a particular response in the reader.

Both of the poets have a few simple ideas. If we deprecate any philosophical complications, we may be allowed to call Swinburne's Liberty and Mr. Kipling's Empire "ideas." They are at least abstract, and not material which emotion can feed long upon. And they are not (in passing) very dissimilar. Swinburne had the Risorgimento, and Garibaldi, and Mazzini, and the model of Shelley, and the recoil from Tennyson, and he produced Liberty.[12] Mr. Kipling, the Anglo-Indian, had frontier welfare, and rebellions, and Khartoum, and he produced the Empire.[13] And we remember Swinburne's sentiments toward the Boers: he wished to intern them all.[14] Swinburne and Mr. Kipling have these and such concepts; some poets, like Shakespeare or Dante or Villon, and some novelists, like Mr. Conrad, have, in contrast to ideas or concepts, points of view, or "worlds" – what are incorrectly called "philosophies." Mr. Conrad is very germane to the question, because he is in many ways the antithesis of Mr. Kipling. He is, for one thing, the antithesis of Empire (as well as of democracy); his characters are the denial of Empire, of Nation, of Race almost, they are fearfully alone with the Wilderness. Mr. Conrad has no ideas, but he has a point of view, a "world"; it can hardly be defined, but it pervades his work and is unmistakable. It could not be otherwise. Swinburne's and Mr. Kipling's ideas could be otherwise. Had Mr. Kipling taken Liberty and Swinburne the Empire, the alteration would be unimportant.

And this is why both Swinburne's and Mr. Kipling's verse in spite of the positive manner which each presses to his service, appear to lack cohesion – to be, frankly, immature. There is no point of view to hold them together. What is the point of view, one man's experience of life, behind "Mandalay," and "Danny Deever," and "MacAndrew," and the "Recessional"?[15] The volume in hand, at least, ought to be consistent with itself: the subjects are in sympathy with each other; they express Mr. Kipling's attitudes toward various aspects of the war. But the poems no more hang together than the verses of a schoolboy. This, in spite of Mr. Kipling's undeniable manner.

The manner itself, indeed, involves no discoveries in syntax or vocabulary; the structure reveals nothing unusual.

> The banked oars fell an hundred strong,
> And backed and threshed and ground,
> But bitter was the rowers' song
> As they brought the war-boat round.[16]

The construction "bitter was . . . as . . ." has a very familiar sound. The old order of words persists, not giving place to new. This is not, however, *the* manner. And we should not be positive that

> The Hun is at the gate! . . .
>
> Be well assured that on our side
> The abiding oceans fight. . .[17]

(Mr. Conrad would hardly issue this opinion about the oceans) were by Mr. Kipling, though we could not associate them with any equally distinguished name.[18] But when we peruse the following –

> A tinker out of Bedford,
> A vagrant oft in quod . . .
> And Bunyan was his name! . . .
>
> They do not preach that their God will rouse them a little before
> the nuts work loose.
> They do not preach that His Pity allows them to leave their work
> when they damn-well choose. . .
>
> There is a gland at the back of the jaw,
> And an answering lump by the collar-bone. . .
>
> When the Himalayan peasant meets the he-bear in his pride. . .[19]

in all of these we have the true formula, with its touch of the newspapers, of Billy Sunday, and the Revised Version filtered through Rabbi Zeal-of-the-Land Busy.[20] The Revised Version (substantially the same style as all the versions from Tindal) is excellent prose for its matter.[21] It is often redundant and bombastic in the Prophets, who sometimes fell into these vices, and it is a model of firm and limpid style in the sayings of Jesus. But it is not a style into which any significant modern content can be shoved. Mr. Kipling is one of the Minor Prophets.[22]

There is one more element in the style or manner of Mr. Kipling which demands attention. The eighteenth century was in part cynical and in part sentimental, but it never arrived at complete amalgamation of the two feelings. Whoever makes a study of the sentimentalism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries will not neglect the peculiar cynical sentiment of Mr. Kipling. In a poem like Mr. Kipling's "The Ladies" the fusion is triumphant. The sentiment of Tennyson and Mrs. Browning is obsolete, it is no

longer a living force; it is superseded by Mr. Kipling's. Tennyson, we must insist, could never have written

> Love at first sight was her trouble,
> She didn't know what it were;
> But I wouldn't do such, 'cause I liked her too much –
> And I learned about women from 'er;[23]

nor could he have written

> Gentlemen-rankers off on a spree,
> Damned from here to eternity,
> O God, have mercy on such as we:
> Ba Ba Ba.[24]

Mr. Kipling may have winked at Tennyson down the road. But Tennyson did not wink back.[25]

And yet Mr. Kipling is very nearly a great writer. There is an unconsciousness about him which, while it is one of the reasons why he is not an artist, is a kind of salvation. There is an echo of greatness in his naive appeal to so large an audience as he addresses; something which makes him, like one or two other writers who are not or hardly artists, a lonely figure. And in *Plain Tales from the Hills* he has given the one perfect picture of a society of English, narrow, snobbish, spiteful, ignorant and vulgar, set down absurdly in a continent of which they are unconscious.[26] What Mirza Murad Ali Beg's book is to all other books of native life, so is Mr. Kipling's to all other books of Anglo-Indian life.[27] It is wrong, of course, of Mr. Kipling to address a large audience; but it is a better thing than to address a small one. The only better thing is to address the one hypothetical Intelligent Man who does not exist and who is the audience of the Artist.

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. George Stuart Gordon, "Mr. Kipling Condemns," an anonymous review of *The Years Between*, *TLS* (10 Apr 1919), 196; Gordon labels Kipling "the unofficial laureate of the Empire" (196).

2. The work of John Oxenham, pseudonym of English journalist and poet William Arthur Dunkerley (1852-1941), appeared occasionally in the *Athenaeum*'s "New Books" section, though rarely in its review pages; a brief notice in the Feb 1919 issue praised his *Hearts Courageous* (1918) as "another volume of attractive pieces, full of human interest." *Athenaeum*, 4638 (Feb 1919), 75.

3. Gustave Flaubert, *Bouvard et Pécuchet* (1881).

4. "a shout in the street": in chapter two of Joyce's *Ulysses*, "Nestor," which had appeared in the *Little Review* in Apr 1918 and in the *Egoist* in Jan/Feb 1919, Stephen responds to Mr. Deasy's suggestion that all of history moves toward the single goal of manifesting God by pointing toward a noisy playing field: "That is God. . . . A shout in the street." "A whisper in the ear of death": an allusion to Shakespeare's *Pericles*, III.i.8-9: "The seaman's whistle / Is as a whisper in the ears of death, / Unheard." J. M. Robertson praises the line in *Elizabethan Literature* (1914), which TSE was reading at this time.

5. Shelley's "To – ," often titled after its opening line, "Music, when soft voices die," appeared in 1824. Campion's "Hark, all you ladies" (1591) begins, "Hark, all you ladies that do sleep! / The fairy-queen Proserpina / Bids you awake"; TSE taught Thomas Campion's lyrics in his 1918 Extension lectures, when he assigned the Muses' library edition (ed. Percival Vivian, 1907) (1.758).

6. From the first chorus of Swinburne's *Atalanta in Calydon* (1865), line 65.

7. The first line of Kipling's "Danny Deever," in *Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Verses* (1892); *read*: "'What are the bugles blowin' for' said Files-on-Parade."

8. From "The City of Brass," in *The Years Between*, 150; TSE's brackets.

9. *Othello* V.ii.285-86; *read*: "towards his feet, but"

10. From the opening stanza of Swinburne's "The Leper" (1866).

11. From Kipling's "The Ladies," in *The Seven Seas* (1896); *read*: "An' the end of it's sittin' and thinkin', / An' dreamin' Hell-fires to see."

12. Swinburne admired the Italian revolutionary Giuseppe Mazzini (1805-72), who was a driving force, along with Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-82), behind the Italian Risorgimento, which brought about the unification of Italy in 1861; he dedicated his "Song of Italy" (1867) to Mazzini and addressed him in "Ode to Mazzini" (ca. 1857). Shelley's "Ode to Liberty" (1820) and "Ode to Naples" (1824) celebrate revolutionary movements in Spain and Italy.

13. The siege of Khartoum (1884-85) was a bloody battle of the Anglo-Sudan War waged in the capital of Sudan, during which the local Sudanese Mahdists defeated colonial Egyptian and British forces. Kipling was born in British-ruled Bombay; in his 1905 undergraduate essay, TSE wrote that the "Anglo-Indian orient" was Kipling's "own special province of literature" (1.8).

14. British Imperial forces fought two wars (1880-81 and 1899-1902) against the Boers, a South African ethnic group of Dutch, German, and Huguenot descent; the second war involved brutal violence against and the internment of Boer women and children. Partaking in a wave of jingoist sentiment in England, Swinburne published war poems like "The Transvaal" (1899) and "On the Death of Colonel Benson" (1901), in which he advocated the internment of the Boers.

15. TSE later selected all four of these poems – "Mandalay" (1892), "Danny Deever" (1892), "McAndrew's Hymn" (1896), and "Recessional" (1897) – for inclusion in his *A Choice of Kipling's Verse* (1941).

16. "The Rowers," 3.

17. "For All We Have and Are" and "A Song in the Storm," 23, 20.

18. TSE especially admired Conrad's *Youth* (1898) and *Typhoon* (1902), both of which deal with hardship at sea; he recommended them to Alain-Fournier in 1911 (*L1* 26).

19. "The Holy War" (37); "The Sons of Martha" (75); "A Death-Bed" (102), *read*: "This is a gland"; "The Female of the Species" (124).

20. American Christian evangelist William Ashley Sunday (1862-1935) relied on his fame as a former baseball player and on his showmanship to preach a message of religious revival to

unprecedented crowds in the early twentieth century; TSE later characterized him as a "religious spellbinder" and "sorcerer of emotional orgy" (820). Rabbi Zeal-of-the-Land Busy is a zealous Puritan preacher in Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* (1631), which TSE recently included on the syllabus for his Extension lectures (1.757).

21. As he explained afterward in a letter to the editor (40), TSE intends not the Revised Version of the Bible (1881-95) but the Authorized Version (1611, also known as the King James Version), which relied substantially on previous partial translations by religious reformer William Tyndale (also Tindall, ca. 1494-1536), who produced the first English versions translated directly from the original Hebrew and Greek (rather than from Latin) and printed on movable type.

22. Minor Prophets: the twelve authors of the shorter prophetic books in the Hebrew scriptures.

23. From the sixth stanza of Kipling's "The Ladies"; *read*: "was 'er trouble, / *She* didn't know what it were; / An' I wouldn't do such, 'cause I liked 'er too much, / But – I learned about women from 'er!"

24. From "Gentlemen-Rankers," in *Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Verses* (1892); *read*: "Gentlemen-rankers out on the spree, / Damned from here to Eternity, / God ha' mercy on such as we, / Baa! Yah! Bah!"

25. An allusion to Kipling's "When 'Omer Smote 'Is Bloomin' Lyre" (in *The Seven Seas*) in which a cockney speaker imagines the response of Homer's audience when they recognized that parts of his song were borrowed or "stolen" from previous songs: "They didn't tell, nor make a fuss, / But winked at 'Omer down the road, / An' 'e winked back."

26. Kipling's first volume of stories, *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1888), is set in India; in his college essay on Kipling, TSE attributed its popularity in part to "the unfamiliarity and picturesqueness of his background" (1.8).

27. An allusion to Kipling's early story, "To Be Filed for Reference" (1888), in which the protagonist boasts that he has composed an epic masterpiece: "'What Mirza Murad Ali Beg's book is to all other books on native life, will my work be to Mirza Murad Ali Beg's!'" The narrator concludes, "This, as will be conceded by any one who knows Mirza Ali Beg's book, was a sweeping statement." *Plain Tales from the Hills* (New York: Doubleday, 1899), 322. Mirza Murad Ali Beg was the pseudonym of Godolphin Mitford (d. 1884), an eccentric English theosophist and author of the epic historical narrative, *Lalun the Beragun; or, The Battle of Paniput. A Legend of Hindoostan* (1884). The line from Kipling's story resurfaced later in the title of TSE's "Lines for Cuscuscaraway and Mirza Murad Ali Beg" (1933) and in "The Unfading Genius of Rudyard Kipling," in which TSE recalls that "a Persian cat I once possessed was dignified by the name of Mirza Murad Ali Beg." *Kipling Journal*, 26 (Mar 1959), 9.

Kipling Redivivus

To the Editor of *The Athenaeum*

The Athenaeum, 4646 (16 May 1919) 344

Sir, – Mr. Lytton Strachey informs me that in my review of Kipling's verse last week I referred to the "Authorized Version" as the "Revised Version."[1] I meant the Bible published by direction of King James I, and still in use in my childhood. Mr. Strachey says that there is a modern edition called the "Revised Version."[2] I admit and apologize for the error.

Yours, etc.,

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. "Kipling Redivivus" (33); Giles Lytton Strachey (1880-1932) likely informed TSE of his mistake either while they were both at Garsington on 10-11 May or the following day when they met in London. TSE had been introduced to him in the summer of 1916 by Clive Bell, and that autumn he recommended Strachey's *Landmarks in French Literature* (1912) to students of his Extension lectures (1.476). The two began to correspond regularly after their latest meeting, and on 19 May, TSE urged Strachey to "keep me in touch with your movements, and perhaps you will even let me have your opinions and Revisions of anything of mine you see in print" (*L1* 352).

2. The Revised Version is an English translation of the Bible published from 1881 to 1895 and based on the Authorized or King James Version (1611).

A Sceptical Patrician[1]

A review of *The Education of Henry Adams: An Autobiography*

London: Constable, 1918 Pp. x + 519.

The Athenaeum, 4647 (23 May 1919) 361-62

Colonel Smith was a person of consideration in the Massachusetts Bay Colony; somewhat against his wishes, his daughter married John Adams, said to be descended from a bricklayer. John Adams, the second President of the United States, had, by his wife Abigail, John Quincy Adams, the sixth President of the United States. John Quincy Adams begat Charles Francis Adams, Minister at the Court of St. James's under President Lincoln; and Charles Francis Adams had, by his wife Abigail, Henry Brooks Adams, the author of this autobiography.[2]

Henry Adams was furthermore well connected; his grandfather Brooks was the richest man in Boston, and his uncle was President of Harvard College. The Unitarian pulpits of Boston were held by other relatives or connections.[3] Henry Adams was born in 1838, and by 1905, when he wrote, he had known a surprising number of people in America and Europe and turned his mind to a surprising variety of studies. It is doubtful whether the book ought to be called an autobiography, for there is too little of the author in it; or whether it may be called Memoirs – for there is too much of the author in it; or a treatise on historical method, which in parts it is. For those who may be interested in different parts of the book the work may be separated as follows.

After the first few chapters, which deal with Adams's life as a boy in Boston, come his experiences and observations as an attaché of the Ministry in London during the Civil War: observations, often illuminating, of the British statesmen of the day, Palmerston, Russell, Bright, and others; some of the men of letters, like Monckton Milnes and Swinburne; and generally on London society of mid-Victoria.[4] This part of the story will provide most entertainment for English readers. The personalities are thin, but not always formal:

> The older daughter of the Milne Gaskells had married Francis Turner Palgrave . . . Old Sir Francis, the father, had been much the greatest of all

> the historians of England, the only one who was un-English; and the reason of his superiority lay in his name, which was Cohen, and his mind, which was Cohen also, or at least not English. He had changed his name to Palgrave in order to please his wife . . .[5] [214]

The comments of a young man, recollected in septuagenarian tranquillity, are honest, and, though not subtle, are pleasing:

> Barring the atrocious insolence and brutality which Englishmen and especially Englishwomen showed to each other – very rarely, indeed, to foreigners – English society was much more easy and tolerant than American. [182]
>
> Balmoral was a startling revelation of royal taste. Nothing could be worse than the toilettes at Court unless it was the way they were worn . . . Fashion was not fashionable in London until the Americans and the Jews were let loose . . . There was not then – outside of a few bankers or foreigners – a good cook or a good table in London . . . If there was a well-dressed woman at table, she was either an American or "Fast." [195] . . . The result was medieval, and amusing; sometimes coarse to a degree that might have startled a roustabout [*i.e.* navvy][6] and sometimes courteous and considerate to a degree that suggested King Arthur's Round Table . . . [201]

These are revelations which are now household words, but it is pleasant to find that they were discovered, in 1862, by a serious young American of the best social position and an earnest desire to study the world and improve his mind and manners.

The second part of the book, concerned with the personalities in the quite sordid American politics from the reign of President Grant, is of even greater interest to those who are interested in the subject.[7] This is as far as the book can be catalogued and indexed. The really impressive interest is in the mind of the author, and in the American mind, or that fragment of it, which he represents.

Henry Adams was an American patrician who had quite sufficient money, the best introductions, and no vocation forced upon him. An English analogy for Henry Adams would have been a George Wyndham;[8] he would have found the straight road in politics, and he would have occupied his considerable leisure with writing on history, or archaeology, or numismatics, or even metaphysics. The American was born to the

governing-class tradition without the inherited power, and he was born to exercise governance, not to acquire it. He was much more refined than the equivalent Englishman, and had less vitality, though a remarkably restless curiosity, eager but unsensuous. And his very American curiosity was directed and misdirected by two New England characteristics: conscientiousness and scepticism.

Here is precisely what makes the book, as an "autobiography," wholly different from any European autobiography worth reading. Adams is perpetually busy with himself. Many of the best autobiographies have been by men who considered themselves more interesting than anybody else, even exclusively interesting; and their effrontery interests you in them. But Adams is superlatively modest, diffident. Conscience told him that one must be a learner all one's life, and as he had the financial means to gratify his conscience, he did so. This is conspicuously a Puritan inheritance: if some millionaires and philanthropists are occupied in doing good to others, and by force, in cheerful innocence of any need of cleansing or furnishing their own minds, still there are always others whose conscience lays upon them the heavy burden of self-improvement. They are usually sensitive people, and they want to do something great; dogged by the shadow of self-conscious incompetence, they are predestined failures.

The caricature which represents a nationality to foreigners is usually completed in its own country by an equally extreme antithesis. Against the naive, Adams represents the in some ways precociously and immaturely sophisticated American. Conscience made him aware that he had been imperfectly educated at Harvard and Berlin, and that there was a vague variety of things he ought to know about. He was also aware, as most Bostonians are, of the narrowness of the Boston horizon. But working with and against conscience was the Boston doubt: a scepticism which is difficult to explain to those who are not born to it. This scepticism is a product, or a cause, or a concomitant, of Unitarianism; it is not destructive, but it is dissolvent. When Emerson as a young man stood in his pulpit and made clear to his congregation that he could no longer administer the Communion, he impressed upon them that he had no prejudice and passed no judgment upon those who continued in the practice, but that he could take no part himself – because (in his own words) it did not interest him.[9] That is an instance of the point of view of several thousands of well-bred people in a provincial American town; and, arrested at the point of ecclesiastical procedure, it is not without an austere grandeur. Henry Adams was

of a later generation; a great many things interested him; but he could believe in nothing: neither in the sagacity of British statesmanship, nor in the perfection of the American form of government, nor in the New World, nor in the Old; not in Darwinism, or in Karl Pearson, or Ernst Mach, or in the wickedness of large issues of paper currency.[10] He wrote a serious article for the *North American Review* in which he demolished the myths which had been erected around Pocahontas, the Indian Queen, and the pleasure of demolition turned to ashes in his mouth.[11] As for Evolution,

> Neither in the *Limulus* nor in the *Terebratula*, nor in the *Cestracion Philippi*, any more than the *Pteraspis*, could one conceive an ancestor, but, if one must, the choice mattered little. [230]

Wherever this man stepped, the ground did not simply give way, it flew into particles; towards the end of his life he came across the speculations of Poincaré, and science disappeared, entirely.[12] He was seeking for education, with the wings of a beautiful but ineffectual conscience beating vainly in a vacuum jar.[13] He found, at best, two or three friends, notably the great John Hay, who had been engaged in settling the problems of China and Cuba and Manchuria.[14] Adams yearned for unity, and found it, after a fashion, by writing a book on the thirteenth century.[15]

The Erinnys which drove him madly through seventy years of search for education[16] – the search for what, upon a lower plane, is called culture – left him much as he was born: well-bred, intelligent, and uneducated. He had attended to everything, respectfully, had accumulated masses of information and known nearly everybody; but he was unaware that education – the education of an individual – is a by-product of being interested, passionately absorbed. He had been too respectful of whatever was important, he laughed at nothing. It is not at all that he was an *amateur*; he would have liked to have been professional in everything; he abandoned lecturing at Harvard because of his doubts of the value of lecturing and the capacity of his pupils; but he had gone at the task in a thoroughly professional way. His extreme sensitiveness to all the suggestions which dampen enthusiasm or dispel conviction may be responsible for what one feels in him as immaturity, indeed as a lack of personality; an instability. The immaturity is marked: we are acutely, painfully aware of an elderly man approaching a new subject of study with "This will be good for me!" *That* is the type of egotism of Henry Adams; it is not a kind which we should

expect to provide an agreeable autobiography; but Adams's is a remarkable confession of that peculiar mind.

For the immaturity there may be another reason. It is probable that men ripen best through experiences which are at once sensuous and intellectual; certainly many men will admit that their keenest ideas have come to them with the quality of a sense-perception; and that their keenest sensuous experience has been "as if the body thought."[17] There is nothing to indicate that Adams's senses either flowered or fruited: he remains little Paul Dombey asking questions.[18] Compare him with a man whom he now and then reminds us of: Henry Adams in 1858, and Henry James in 1870 (both at still receptive ages), land at Liverpool and descend at the same hotel.[19]

> The small hour was just that of my having landed at Liverpool in the gusty, cloudy, overwhelmingly English morning, and pursued, with immediate intensities of appreciation, . . . a course which had seated me at a late breakfast in the coffee-room of the old Adelphi Hotel ("Radley's" as I had to deplore its lately having ceased to be dubbed), and handed me over without a scruple to my fate. This doom of inordinate exposure to appearances, aspects, images, every protrusive item almost . . . I regard in other words as having settled upon me once for all while I observed for instance that in England the plate of buttered muffin and its cover . . .[20]

So far James. And Adams:

> The ocean, the Persia, Captain Judkins, and Mr. G. P. R. James, the most distinguished passenger, vanished one Sunday morning in a furious gale in the Mersey, to make place for the drearier picture of a Liverpool street as seen from the Adelphi coffee-room in November murk, followed instantly by the passionate delights of Chester and the romance of red-sandstone architecture. [72]

The contrast could be carried further with James's memories of Tennyson and George Eliot against Adams on, say, Monckton Milnes. Henry James was not, by Adams's standards, "educated," but particularly limited; it is the sensuous contributor to the intelligence that makes the difference.

Henry James, however, was comparatively parvenu. He did not have the Presidents, the Minister, the Unitarian clergy in force behind him. Still, Colonel Smith, according to his portrait, was fat, florid, and well-fed; and John Adams, severer in features, has a very substantial appearance,

and a face worried, if at all, chiefly by questions of foreign and domestic policy.[21]

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. Composed circa 4 May, when TSE told his mother, "I am writing now about a cousin of ours, who has written a very interesting book which you would like to read" (*L1* 342). He conveyed his impression to his brother on 14 Sept: "Henry Adams's book is more than good. It is unique" (*L1* 396).

2. The opening chapters of *The Education of Henry Adams* – printed privately in 1906 and reprinted posthumously in 1918 – give an account of the ancestry of author Henry Brooks Adams (1838-1918), including the Reverend (rather than Colonel) William Smith (1707-83), his daughter Abigail Smith Adams (1744-1818), John Adams (1735-1826), John Quincy Adams (1767-1848), Charles Francis Adams (1807-86), and Abigail Brooks (1808-89). TSE's paternal grandmother, Abby Adams Eliot née Cranch (the wife of William Greenleaf Eliot) was great-granddaughter to Reverend William Smith.

3. In *The Education*, Adams reports that wealthy Boston merchant Peter Chardon Brooks (1767-1849) owned the largest estate in Boston. Adams's uncle Edward Everett (1794-1865) was president of Harvard from 1846 to 1849; among the other relatives who held Unitarian pulpits was Nathaniel Langdon Frothingham, pastor of the First Church of Boston from 1815 to 1850 and brother-in-law to Abigail (Brooks) Adams.

4. British politicians Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston (1784-1865), John Russell, first Earl Russell (1792-1878), and John Bright (1811-89). Poet and critic Richard Monckton Milnes, first Baron Houghton (1809-85), well known for *Life, Letters, and Literary Remains of John Keats* (1848), was instrumental in the publication of Swinburne's early verse.

5. Archivist and historian Sir Frances Palgrave (1788-1861) changed his name from Cohen when he converted from Judaism to the Church of England in 1823, shortly before his marriage to Elizabeth Turner, whose mother's surname he adopted by royal license.

6. roustabout: originally American term for deckhand or dock laborer; navvy: British term for construction laborer, originally on canals; TSE's brackets.

7. Even before various scandals marred the Republican presidency of Ulysses S. Grant (1822-85), Adams regarded him with suspicion and distrust, calling him "torpid," "dangerous," and "simple-minded" (265).

8. On 9 July 1919, TSE wrote to John Quinn, who was working on his behalf to find an American publisher for a new volume of recent verse and prose, that he hoped to print his review of Wyndham's *Essays in Romantic Literature* alongside the present review under the heading, "Two Types," parts I and II. He added that "the popularity of Adams's book ought to lend an interest in that essay. I wonder what American opinion would think of my article on Adams, but it is a type that I *ought* to know better than any other" (*L1* 373).

9. TSE refers to the sermon "The Lord's Supper," which Emerson delivered at Boston's Second Church on 9 Sept 1832, on resigning his pastorate; *Complete Works* (1903-04), vol XI.

10. Adams discusses his objections to the positivistic aspects of the work of British mathematician Karl Pearson (1857-1936) and Austrian physicist Ernst Mach in his chapter on

"The Grammar of Science" and writes about "the best treatment of a debased currency" in "Darwinism."

11. In his chapter on "Dilettantism," Adams recalls being urged to publish an essay that would debunk Captain John Smith's account in *The Generall Historie of Virginia* (1624) of his dramatic, lifesaving rescue by the Native American woman, Pocahontas. Adams admits that he published the article "Captain John Smith" (1867) for the sake of his reputation and thereafter calls it "a false start" (223).

12. The relativism of French mathematician Jules Henri Poincaré (1854-1912) in *La Science et l'Hypothèse* (1902), Adams concludes, posed an insurmountable obstacle to the scientific quest for unity and demonstrated the dominance of chaos and multiplicity (455).

13. An adaptation of Matthew Arnold's description of Shelley as a "beautiful and ineffectual angel, beating in the void his luminous wings in vain," in "Byron," *Essays in Criticism: Second Series* (London: Macmillan, 1888), 204.

14. John Milton Hay (1838-1905), private secretary to Abraham Lincoln and later secretary of state under President William McKinley; TSE associated him with the beginning of an admirably "disinterested record of foreign policy" in the United States (*L1* 312).

15. Adams originally thought to give his *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres* (1904) the subtitle "A Study of Thirteenth-Century Unity" (435).

16. Erinnys: also the Erinyes or Furies, in Greek myth and drama, were three goddesses who pursued and avenged those who broke vows or wrongly shed blood.

17. From Samuel Whyte's description of Pygmalion's sculpture in "The Nosegay" (1772), ll. 95-97: "his Ivory Maid, / So true to Nature, exquisitely wrought, / It smil'd, and look'd, as if the body thought." *A Collection of Poems on Various Subjects* (Dublin: Marchbank, 1795), 169.

18. Paul Dombey Junior, in Dickens's *Dombey and Sons* (1846-48), is a sickly, precocious boy who dies at age six; in chapter eight, he repeatedly asks his father, "'Papa! what's money?'" to which the exasperated London merchant can find no satisfactory response.

19. Cf. "Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar" (summer 1919): "Burbank crossed a little bridge / Descending at a small hotel" (*CPP* 23).

20. James was twenty-seven at the time of this arrival, the account of which he gives in the posthumously published *The Middle Years* (1917); TSE commissioned Pound's recent review of the volume for the James issue of the *Egoist*, in which Pound writes, "the effects of H. J.'s first breakfasts in Liverpool . . . are of infinitely more value than any anecdotes of the Laureate." "The Middle Years," *Egoist*, 5 (Jan 1918), 3.

21. Portraits of Smith and Adams do not appear in the edition under review.

Beyle and Balzac

A review of *A History of the French Novel, to the Close of the Nineteenth Century*, vol. II, by George Saintsbury

London: Macmillan, 1919. Pp. xxvi + 586.

The Athenaeum, 4648 (30 May 1919) 392-93

Turning over the pages of the Preface to this Volume II, we respire an elegiac note. For Professor Saintsbury apparently says that he is not going to write any more Histories.[1] Who will write them? for they will be written, and they will not be so readable as Mr. Saintsbury's. They will be written by Professors, but not by such charming Professors as Saintsbury; they will be scholarly, but not more scholarly; they will be even more exhaustive, but they will not be capitalized by the scholarship of an Honorary Fellow of Merton College; they will flow from the Columbia University Press, and from the presses of provincial and colonial Universities; they will be the work of men not so capable of understanding a third-rate book as Mr. Saintsbury is of understanding a first-rate one, and not so capable of seeing the merit in a first-rate book as Mr. Saintsbury is of seeing the merit in a third-rate one.

Mr. Saintsbury is a master of the literary history – a form of writing which demands qualifications of its own. The literary historian needs critical gifts, but his task is not that of the critic. He needs a sense of values, but he has little occasion to exercise it beyond the mere indication of the place of the great. He must not have any very pronounced theory or scheme and must not set out to prove anything very important; for if he does this he is bound to shape his material; and if he shapes his material he will leave somebody out; and his most important business is to read all the books that we do not want to read, and enjoy the books that we could not enjoy – to enjoy them, not because he imagines them to be any better than they are, but because they are books. And he must make us enjoy his enjoyment in enjoying the escape which he gives us from the necessity of reading them. These qualities would seem a chimerical ideal, if they were not lifted directly from the achievement of Mr. Saintsbury.

Remembering these particulars of literary historianship, no one should experience surprise or express reproach at the fact that Mr. Saintsbury has assigned a short chapter to Flaubert, run Stendhal and Balzac together into one, and devoted the greater part of a long one to Paul de Kock. One must read Flaubert anyway, so the brief chapter is quite sufficient (and on the whole right); one enjoys reading Saintsbury on Paul de Kock, and is convinced that there is no longer any necessity or excuse for reading that author.[2] Chateaubriand, admired of French critics and usually tedious to honest English readers, even Mr. Saintsbury cannot wholly absolve us from; but Feuillet, About, Feydeau, Ourliac, Borel and others we are grateful and satisfied to know about.[3] But Mr. Saintsbury could not gracefully have omitted the two great writers, and he must in some degree be held accountable for what he says about them. At least, his admittance of Stendhal and Flaubert is useful in provoking a question which he does not seem aware of: why these two stand completely apart from all the rest, with the derivative exception of Maupassant.[4] There is something that they have in common, which is deeper than style and is the cause of style; shared, too, with Turgenev, to a less extent with Hardy, Conrad, Hawthorne, James, hardly at all with our Victorian novelists. Mr. Saintsbury challenges the question by his violent incarceration of Stendhal in the same cell with Balzac, and by his evident taste for Balzac. The question rises more shrilly to our lips when he finally lets himself out to the length of a definition of "Balzacity," of what, in fact, he really likes. This is the "constitution of Balzacity":

> . . . the astonishing *union* of Imagination with Observation – two things which except in the highest poetry are apt to be rather strangers to each other – and by putting Imagination last he [*i.e.*, Victor Hugo in speaking of Balzac] meant also doubtless that this was the dominating – the Masculine – element in the marriage.[167][5]

And Mr. Saintsbury says later:

> For the fact is that the real Balzac lies – to and for me – almost entirely in that *aura* of other-worldliness of which I have spoken.[170]

It is such as *La Peau de chagrin*, *La Recherche de l'absolu*, *Le Chef-d'œuvre inconnu*, that Mr. Saintsbury admires, and that he candidly enjoys more than *La Chartreuse de Parme*.[6] These are remarkable stories, of Balzac's;

and their merit is not disparaged if we put forward the claim that there is a difference, absolute of kind, which sets a chasm between them and the work of Henri-Beyle Stendhal; which makes the latter, in the profoundest sense, the more *moral* of the two.[7]

Balzac has (and it is what seems to thrill Mr. Saintsbury) this "aura," which is easily called "mystical," but more truly "occult." But this is only one phase of the Comedy? No, what is present in the *Études philosophiques* is the same thing even in *César Birotteau*.[8] This aura, of a pinkish colour, omnipresent, is the "union of imagination and observation" [167]. If we compare the two men, Beyle and Balzac, bluntly and without intimate knowledge of Beyle, it is for a moment easy to think that the aura provides exactly something which Beyle lacks. But interpolate in the comparison some writer who would be admitted to possess the gift of "Imagination" to at least a degree equal with Balzac, and the aura sputters and goes out. No one will deny to Dostoevsky an imagination at least equal to Balzac's; some of the things he tells are even more unimaginable. But the Imagination is utterly different, and put to utterly different uses. If you examine some of Dostoevsky's most successful, most imaginative "flights," you find them to be projections, continuations, of the actual, the observed: the final scene of the *Idiot*, the hallucinations at the beginning of the same book and in *Crime and Punishment*, even (what is more questionable) the interview of Ivan Karamazov with the Devil[9] – Dostoevsky's point of departure is always a human brain in a human environment, and the "aura" is simply the continuation of the quotidian experience of the brain into seldom explored extremities of torture. Because most people are too unconscious of their own suffering to suffer much, this continuation appears fantastic. But Dostoevsky begins with the real world, as Beyle does; he only pursues reality farther in a certain direction. In Balzac the fantastic element is of another sort: it is not an extension of reality, it is an atmosphere thrown upon reality direct from the personality of the writer. We cannot look *at* it, as we can look at anything in Dostoevsky; we can only see things *in* it, we are plunged into it ourselves, and some readers at any rate are always glad to get out of it. If we ask ourselves in relation to what real solid object the "atmosphere" of Balzac has meaning, the incantation is powerless. The atmosphere of Balzac is the highest possible development of the atmosphere of Mrs. Radcliffe. Laurent Tailhade was right when he spoke of the work of Balzac as a fresco crumbling away year by year.[10]

Balzac united imagination with observation, and it is as much the imagination as the observation, not very profound, which carries us through the pages of *La Cousine Bette*.[11] Mr. Mackenzie's *Carnival* also unites imagination with observation.[12] The great artists do not unite imagination with observation. In the great artist imagination is a very different faculty from Balzac's: it becomes a fine and delicate tool for an operation on the sensible world. It is impossible to say that certain scenes between Julien and Mathilde de la Mole are a union of imagination, etc.; they go too deep for that.[13] Stendhal's scenes, some of them, and some of his phrases, read like cutting one's own throat; they are a terrible humiliation to read, in the understanding of human feelings and human illusions of feeling that they force upon the reader.

The exposure, the dissociation of human feeling is a great part of the superiority of Beyle and Flaubert to Balzac. Balzac, relying upon atmosphere, is capable of evading an issue, of satisfying himself with a movement or a word. At the end of "Adieu" the General, at a fashionable dinner-table, is asked by a lady why, with all his accomplishments and the world at his feet, he does not marry. "All the world smiles upon you." "Oui, mais c'est un sourire qui me tue."[14] A facile escape for the General, still more facile for his creator. But the patient analysis of human motives and emotions, and human misconceptions about motives and emotions, is the work of the greatest novelists, and the greatest novelists dispense with atmosphere. Beyle and Flaubert strip the world; and they were men of far more than the common intensity of feeling, of passion.

It is this intensity, precisely, and consequent discontent with the inevitable inadequacy of actual living to the passionate capacity, which drove them to art and to analysis. The surface of existence coagulates into lumps which look like important simple feelings, which are identified by names as feelings, which the patient analyst disintegrates into more complex and trifling, but ultimately, if he goes far enough, into various canalizations of something again simple, terrible and unknown. The Russians point to this thing, and Turgenev seems almost at times to have had some glimpse of it. Beyle and Flaubert do not point, but they suggest unmistakably the awful separation between potential passion and any actualization possible in life. They indicate also the indestructible barriers between one human being and another. This is a "mysticism" not to be extracted from Balzac, or even from Miss Underhill.[15] "Ainsi tout leur a craqué dans la main."[16] To avoid

pursuing these philosophical vagaries any further beyond the point of tedium, it may be observed that their origin was an attempt to question the most questionable definition in a delightful book about Nodier, Ponson de Terrail and many other writers, including, I am glad to say, Fromentin.[17]

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. Saintsbury was editor of the forty-volume English edition of Balzac's complete *La Comédie humaine* and author of numerous literary histories, including *A History of Nineteenth Century Literature* (1895), *A History of Criticism and Literary Taste in Europe* (3 vols, 1900-04), and *A History of English Prosody* (3 vols, 1906-10); this was his last historical work. TSE had previously suggested that his prose was as memorable as that of Arnold and Wordsworth (1.552).

2. In a letter to Mary Hutchinson in July 1919, TSE included Flaubert on a list of authors and subjects that contemporary culture has "merely assimilated" to its popular taste superficially (*L1* 377-78). About Charles Paul de Kock (1793-1871), Saintsbury admits: "one would hardly, except in cases of actual novel-famine . . . read a book of Paul's twice" (45). "Who but Saintsbury," TSE later asked, "in writing a book on the French novel, would give far more pages to Paul de Kock than to Flaubert?" (*TCC* 12).

3. Though he admits that "there is perhaps no more difficult person to appraise in all French literature" than François-René de Chateaubriand (1768-1848), Saintsbury nonetheless argues for his worth based on his assault on "the proceedings of the *philosophes*" (20-21). He includes Octave Feuillet (1821-90), Edmond About (1828-85), and Ernest-Aimé Feydeau (1821-73) among the minor, non- or antinaturalist novelists writing during the reign of Napoleon III; Édouard Ourliac (1813-48) and Petrus Borel (1809-59) are discussed earlier under the category "Minors of 1830."

4. Saintsbury criticizes Guy de Maupassant, student and disciple of Flaubert, for his narrow scope, beyond which "there is a whole universe . . . of which he seems to be blankly ignorant" (512).

5. TSE's brackets.

6. Balzac's three novellas, *The Magic Skin* (1831), *The Quest of the Absolute* (1834), and *The Unknown Masterpiece* (1831), each of which contains elements of the fantastic, eventually appeared together in *Études philosophiques*, the second major section (following *Études de mœurs* and preceding *Études analytiques*) of his *magnum opus*, the compilation *La Comédie humaine*, published in 17 volumes from 1842 to 1848. English translations of these three stories appeared together in volume 1 of Saintsbury's edition (*Works*, 1901). Saintsbury calls Stendhal's *The Charterhouse of Parma* characteristically macabre and lacking in passion (140).

7. London publisher Martin Secker had recently proposed that TSE write a book on Stendhal, and though TSE admitted to John Quinn on 9 July 1919 that the prospect intrigued him, he ultimately declined (*L1* 374).

8. Many of the stories that Balzac included in the second section of *La Comédie humaine*, *Études philosophiques* – including the three that TSE mentions above – were first published between 1831 and 1834, while the realistic tale of a perfume shop owner's bankruptcy, *Histoire de la grandeur et de la décadence de César Birotteau, parfumeur*, appeared in 1837 and was classified in the preceding section, *Études de mœurs*.

9. TSE first read the novels of Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821-81), specifically the three to which he refers here, *Crime and Punishment* (1866), *The Idiot* (1868), and *The Brothers Karamazov* (1879), in the French translations recommended by Alain-Fournier in 1910.

10. Tailhade writes in his preface to a 1912 edition of Balzac's *La Cousine Bette* (Paris: Alphonse Lemerre): "Témoin de son époque, porte-parole d'un monde transitoire, Balzac peignit à fresque sur un mur qui s'écaille et dont le crépi se désagrège par endroits" [Witness to his era, spokesman for a transitory world, Balzac painted a fresco on a wall whose surface is flaking away, and whose plaster is crumbling in places] (vi).

11. *La Cousine Bette* (1846) is the first of two novels in *Les Parents pauvres* [*Poor Relations*] (1846-47), a section of "Scènes de la vie parisienne" in Balzac's *La Comédie humaine*.

12. *Carnival* (1912) was the best-selling second novel of Edwardian novelist and essayist Compton Mackenzie (1883-1972).

13. Books two and three of Stendhal's *Le Rouge et le Noir* (1831) recount the disastrous love affair of Julien Sorel and Mathilde de la Mole, the daughter of his aristocratic employer whose refusal to bless their marriage puts in motion the events that lead to Sorel's execution for attempted murder.

14. *Trans*: Yes, but it is a smile that is killing me. From the conclusion of Balzac's "Adieu" (1830). General Philippe de Sucy refers to the haunting smile of his deranged lover, who seemed finally to recognize him in the moments before her death; directly after the quoted passage, Balzac relates de Sucy's violent suicide.

15. TSE had read and kept note cards on Evelyn Underhill's *Mysticism* (1911) – particularly from the fifth chapter of part 2, "Voices and Visions" – during his studies at Harvard (Houghton).

16. *Trans*: "Thus everything has come to pieces in their hands." *Bouvard and Pécuchet*, trans. T. W. Earp and G. W. Stonier (New York: New Directions, 1954), 347. Saintsbury singles out this line and calls it "monumental," "the initial and conclusion of the whole matter" (401 n.2); it is excerpted from Flaubert's sketch for completing the unfinished novel (1881). TSE adapted the line in a letter to John Quinn on 13 Nov 1918 – "Everything turned to red tape in my hands" (*L1* 299).

17. Saintsbury suggests that there is "scarcely a more interesting figure in French literary history" than novelist and librarian Charles Nodier (1780-1844) (80); he admits that Pierre-Alexis Ponson du Terrail (1829-71) "bores me . . . Who can read such stuff as this?"(438); and he writes that the novel *Dominique* (1862), by painter and novelist Eugène Fromentin (1820-76), stands "by itself . . . and stands crowned" (280).

Criticism in England[1]

A review of *Old and New Masters*, by Robert Lynd

London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1919. Pp. 249.

The Athenaeum, 4650 (13 June 1919) 456-57

We generally agree in conversation that the amount of good literary criticism in English is negligible. Mr. Arnold Bennett comprehended the usual case adequately in his *Books and Persons*: putting the case from the point of view of the two or three hundred persons who perceive the defect.[2] He overlooks in his statement our greatest critic – Dryden; he says that every sentence of Lamb proves his taste and his powerful intelligence, and that Churton Collins possessed no real feeling for literature: both of which are exaggerations; and he says also that Matthew Arnold with study and discipline might have been a great critic, which is probably a superstition.[3] Still, Mr. Bennett in a couple of paragraphs covers everything that passes in conversation on the subject between intelligent people. We cannot, of course, assign any term to the inquiry why there is so little criticism; but we can take up the investigation at the point where Mr. Bennett leaves it, by asking, What is the matter with the criticism which we get? This is the inquest to which a book like Mr. Lynd's conducts us.[4]

It is not enough, certainly, to protest that no one makes a profession of criticism; that every critic is furtively a novelist or a poet. Here is Mr. Lynd. Whether he is a novelist or a poet, or a novelist and a poet, or not, Mr. Lynd is known primarily as a critic; as a critic he has an audible and a merited reputation. He is serious, but not pedantic; he writes a great deal for papers, but I do not believe that he often expresses an opinion which afterthought retracts. He is educated, and he is, usually and on the whole, on the right side. The articles which he wrote were good articles. But they do not make a very good book.

Something is wrong which is not wholly the fault of Mr. Lynd. It ought to be possible, we feel with conviction, to write review articles which should be worth cobbling into a book. Even though periodicals may be a necessary evil; though their function may be something quite different from the quick production of superior thought; though they may merely

provide a substantial fluid upon which the lighter oil of current conversation may float from week to week or quarter to quarter; nevertheless it is difficult to give up the idea that a really good article is worth preserving. We resent even the necessary alterations, though we see why they are compelled. In Mr. Lynd's case there is the initial disappointment of finding that he has failed to make some of the necessary alterations, followed by a suspicion that his method, his whole structure of thought, is wrong for a book, triumphant as it is for its original application. His way of introducing a subject, for instance, which seems to be almost a part of the structure, is evidence of this success and failure. The first page of his essay on Chesterton and Belloc is reducible to the statement that Chesterton and Belloc are inseparable; it is rounded off and impressed by a reference, excellent in itself, to the Great Twin Brethren who fought so well for Rome.[5] We are quite aware of the uses of this sort of curtain-raiser in a periodical. The audience must be attracted, like the audience of a park speaker, and must be coaxed into the proper receptive attitude. The periodical writer faces the risk of the reader's breaking off and turning to the next article. But if we are bold enough to publish a book we must be bold enough to presume the initial attention of the reader; the puzzle is how to maintain his attention by good substance and good manners. The prefatory gestures only waste the reader's time.

These gestures are more irritating when Mr. Lynd's prelude is serious instead of flippant. Thus he presents Strindberg:

> The mirror that Strindberg held up to nature was a cracked one. It was cracked in a double sense – it was crazy. [123]

Villon's poetry is "a map of disaster and a chronicle of lost souls" [98]. Tchehov "does not deliver messages to us from the mountain-top like Tolstoy . . ." [171].[6]

These are not serious enough introductions to really serious writers. And when we go further we find that Mr. Lynd never does become *quite* serious. He obeys some inner check; perhaps he has been unconsciously bullied by the periodical public. He is never uninterested or uninteresting, he is never unintelligent; he never goes far wide of the mark, but his arrow does not flesh very deep. He never, that is, quite dares to treat a book austerely by criteria of art and of art alone; whether he is conscious of the fact or not, the public would not stand that; he never dissects a personality to its ultimate constituents; the public does not want to know so much. He

only allows so much of his considerable intelligence in his work as can be endured. He is quite innocent in these abstentions, an unconscious victim of the world.

We learn about Turgenev, by this method, first that he was charming. It is then recalled that a Frenchman described Turgenev in Paris as

> a large figure with a curious chastity of mind who seemed bewildered by some of the barbarous jests of civilized men of genius. [117-18]

Next, his generosity of spirit toward other writers. Then his "almost feminine refinement" [118]. And after mention of his indifference to Pan-Slavism we are told that

> in his novels, Turgenev regarded it as his life-work to portray Russia truthfully, not to paint and powder and "prettify" it for show purposes. [119]

He was an artist. He said, "You need truth, remorseless truth, as regards your own sensations" [120]. He was a realist, and he did not invent his characters; he took them from acquaintance. He lacked exuberance. His human beings "have a way of being curiously ineffectual human beings" [122].

> Luckily, if Turgenev could not put his trust in Russian men, he believed with all his heart in the courage and goodness of Russian women . . . .
>
> His realism was not, in the last analysis, realism of disparagement, but a realism of affection. [122]

But Mr. Lynd has not brought us to the last analysis. These observations do not compose even a superficial character of the novelist Turgenev. Some of them are more, some less important. The statement (*vide supra*) about his bewilderment at the barbarous jests of civilized men of genius is important: it ought to lead to a study of Turgenev's place, as a Russian, among the men of Paris. Was his art affected by them, did it affect them? how much real contact was there? His generosity is irrelevant. Then his "almost feminine refinement." Has it, or has it not, anything to do with the "curious chastity" remarked above, and does it apply to his work? And (in passing) is refinement particularly feminine, or is there a particularly feminine refinement, and why was Turgenev's refinement feminine instead of masculine? And is it feminine to "regard it as his life-work to portray Russia truthfully, not to paint and powder and 'prettify' it"? What is the exuberance which Turgenev is said to have lacked? Is it a quality conspicuous in

Flaubert or Henry James, and is the defect a loss to Turgenev's art or a limitation upon his greatness? Is Bazarov more "ineffectual" than Julien Sorel, and if so what of it?[7] How can a writer "understand the Hamlet in man almost *too* well" [122]? Why is it "lucky" that Turgenev could believe in the courage and goodness of Russian women? "With the majority of novelists," Mr. Lynd says, "women are sexual or sentimental accidents" [122]. The majority of *good* novelists? Are Manon Lescaut, Marianne, Emma Bovary (or the Emma of Jane Austen), Jeanie Deans, the Countess in *The Europeans*, Hepzibah Pyncheon – are these (at random) sexual or sentimental accidents?[8] Why should Turgenev rank with Browning and Meredith as a creator of noble women, and exactly what literary rank is assigned to creators of noble women?

Analysis and comparison methodically, with sensitiveness, intelligence, curiosity, intensity of passion, and infinite knowledge: all these are necessary to the great critic. Comparison the periodical public does not want much of: it does not like to be made to feel that it ought to have read much more than it has read before it can follow the critic's thought; analysis it is afraid of. But if Mr. Lynd took more opportunity to practise comparison and analysis in his articles he would give us a more profitable estimate of Turgenev and Dostoevsky, and would perhaps not rank Mr. Masefield and Mr. Squire quite so high as poets; and he would not leave us uncertain how good a poet was Mr. Flecker.[9] He is, we may be permitted to imagine, a tired man like other tired men who have to make a living by literature and also have consciences; tired men who want to make a book and cannot allow themselves that luxury; and the tired men do make books – they cannot wholly deny themselves – but the books are mutilated and unfinished.

There is, however, another quality required of a critical book which can more easily be spared from a critical review. There must be a subject and a personal point of view to hold the book together. The greater French critics, and even the less, manage this in one way or another; sometimes, as in Brunetière, it is a bias, a prejudice, almost to the point of propaganda.[10] Yet it goes to make Brunetière an interesting figure, and gives his writings seriousness. Taine had a theory, perhaps an absurd theory, but it is part of Taine.[11] La Harpe is not dull.[12] Sainte-Beuve had his curiosity in certain problems; it is Sainte-Beuve's curiosities, more than the information or the results obtained, that embalm Port-Royal. Mr. Lynd ought to turn loose his passions, his curiosities, even his prejudices – if he will make them distinct and evident. He is too conscientious to do this in a journalistic way;

and therefore Mr. Chesterton will beat him at that game. Mr. Chesterton is not a critic, but he is entertaining, and he has, in a lower form than the French critics, personality.[13] Mr. Lynd could entertain a more fastidious public than Mr. Chesterton's, if he would be all the more a critic.

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. Composed circa 1 June, when TSE told Mary Hutchinson, "Robert Lynd's collected papers stuck in my throat, or clogged my liver" (*L1* 356).

2. Bennett writes, "I ask in vain where are the great English critics of English literature. . . . The best of our own seem either fragmentary or provincial – yes, curiously provincial. Except for Hazlitt we have, I believe, no even approximately first-class writer who devoted his main activity to criticism." "English Literary Criticism," *Books and Persons: Being Comments on a Past Epoch, 1908-1911* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1917), 267-68.

3. Bennett suggests that the English essayist Charles Lamb (1775-1834) "would have been a first-class critic if he hadn't given the chief part of his life to clerkship": "Every sentence of Lamb proves his taste and powerful intelligence" (268). Critic John Churton Collins (1848-1908), he argues, "possessed no real feeling for literature, and thus his judgment . . . cut a figure prodigiously absurd" (269). "With study and discipline," Bennett concludes, Matthew Arnold "might perhaps have been a great critic, only his passion for literature was not strong enough to make him give up school-inspecting" (268).

4. Robert Wilson Lynd (1879-1949) was known for his literary and political essays, which appeared regularly in the *Daily News*, where he had been literary editor since 1909, in *The Nation*, and recently in the *Athenaeum*. Over a year after the present review appeared, Lynd published a harsh review of *The Sacred Wood* ("Buried Alive," *Contemporary Reviews*, 57-59). In response, TSE wrote to Sidney Schiff of Lynd's "slovenly journalese and parsonical zeal" and remarked the "coincidence that I should have reviewed a book of Lynd's essays last year, and damned it, I believe, by quoting from it" (*L1* 525).

5. Lynd refers to essayists G. K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc (1870-1953) as "veritable reincarnations of the Heavenly twins" (25), Castor and Pollux, the mythological sons of Leda and Zeus. He concludes by quoting from "The Battle of Lake Regillus" (1842) by Thomas Babington Macaulay, who calls them the "Great Twin Brethren / Who fought so well for Rome" *Lays of Ancient Rome* (1842).

6. Russian playwright Anton Pavlovich Chekhov (1860-1904); TSE follows Lynd's spelling.

7. Yevgeny Bazarov, the protagonist of Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons* (1862), rebels against the old order, yet falls in love with a wealthy widow and is rejected; he later dies from an infection that he contracts while dissecting the body of a peasant. Julien Sorel, the opportunistic son of a peasant in Stendhal's *Le Rouge et le Noir*, also resents the upper class, yet in his failed quest for social distinction, engages in several love affairs with French aristocrats before being executed for the attempted murder of one of them.

8. TSE's list of female protagonists includes Manon Lescaut in *L'Histoire du chevalier des Grieux et de Manon Lescaut* [*The History of the Chevalier des Grieux and of Manon Lescaut*] (1731) by Abbé Prévost; Marianne in Marivaux's *La Vie de Marianne*; Emma Bovary in Flaubert's

Madame Bovary; the protagonist of Jane Austen's *Emma* (1816); Jeanie Deans in Sir Walter Scott's *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818); the Baroness Eugenia Munster in Henry James's *The Europeans* (1878); and Hepzibah Pyncheon in Hawthorne's *The House of Seven Gables* (1851).

9. Along with J. C. Squire and John Masefield, James Elroy Flecker (1884-1915) belonged to the group of poets who published regularly in Edward Marsh's *Georgian Poetry* anthologies.

10. TSE recommended the criticism of Ferdinand Brunetière to students of his 1916 lectures on Modern French literature, particularly for his "exposition and criticism of contemporary ideas (neo-classicism, neo-Catholicism, etc.)" (1.476).

11. In the introduction to his *Histoire de la littérature anglaise* [*History of English Literature*] (1863) and in *De l'intelligence* [*On Intelligence*] (1871), Hippolyte Taine proposed a determinist and mechanistic theory of all mental and creative activity.

12. French critic and playwright Jean-François de La Harpe (1739-1803), author of the sixteen-volume *Lycée ou Cours de littérature ancienne et moderne* [*Lycée; or, A Course of Ancient and Modern Literature*] (1799-1805).

13. Chesterton's unwillingness to take literature seriously, TSE argued the previous year in the *Egoist*, places him among the "non-professionals in criticism"; his style is "fleshed and boned in irrelevance" (1.700).

The Education of Taste[1]

A review of *English Literature during the Last Half-Century* by J. W. Cunliffe

New York: Macmillan, 1919. Pp. viii + 315.

The Athenaeum, 4652 (27 June 1919) 520-21

America outstrips the world in the development of the text-book; America has carried the text-book into conquests elsewhere unaspired to by that humble vehicle of instruction; in America every serious work threatens eventually to conform to the text-book decorum, and to wear the text-book uniform of bibliography and guide to Further Reading; in America instruction is a manifest of seriousness. Professor Cunliffe avows that he has "encouraged young people who are preparing themselves for the writer's task to make themselves acquainted with the works of the nearer, as well as of the more remote past," and adds in justification of his book that "it seems reasonable that he should afford them what help he can"; and further that he intends to provide "guidance for firsthand study" [vii]. On perusing the volume with the author's intention clearly in mind, we are thrown into bemusement over the discord between this intention and even the plan upon which the work is conceived. For clearly the book of such an intention is not to be merely a collection of essays on twelve or fourteen writers. If the young people preparing themselves for the writer's task are to advance their preparation, they must learn something from the book as a whole; they must be guided to appreciate each novelist or poet for what he is, and they must also be shown that Literature is an historical structure with some coherence. They must not be entertained or stupefied by a circus procession.

Here is a problem not only for the tutor of young persons, but also for the literary historian and the critic. Wherever there is to be consideration of any group or number of writers, several activities may come into exercise: there are the feelings, emotions, direct impressions excited by immediate contact with each writer; there are the feelings, emotions, impressions aroused by contrast and comparison of several writers, and there are the theories we may erect accounting for these data. Also, there is the generality,

which is usually a substitute for both impression and theory. It is in this last faculty that Professor Cunliffe excels. To communicate impressions is difficult; to communicate a co-ordinated system of impressions is more difficult; to theorize demands vast ingenuity, and to avoid theorizing requires vast honesty. But to enunciate a generality is easy, and seldom useful. Professor Cunliffe's aim is to encourage "systematic study" [vii]. Very well; to emphasize the system he presents an introduction which apparently gives the background for the later 19th-century literature. The jumble of stage properties in this background includes Liberalism, Social Reform, Mr. Sidney Webb, the Cinema, the National Insurance Act, "the establishment of the theory of evolution by natural selection" [8], Huxley, Biblical criticism, the reaction ("it was agreed that between religion and science there was no necessary antagonism" [14]), rapid transition (Manchester, steam-engines); and at the end Mr. Cunliffe advances to the front of the stage and announces that "it is upon the foundation laid by the writers of the last half-century that the present generation has built and must continue to build" [15].

The Victorian Age was a very complex period; to show how these economic phenomena moulded or affected literature would be a labour of very great pains and infinite critical subtlety and skill, a labour demanding the most heroic abstentions from generalizing. The fact is that Mr. Cunliffe does not try; he has got the background "off his chest"; and he ceases to bother his head with it. He proceeds informatively from one writer to another almost as if each were the sole occupant of an island of his own. The young person who has begun his literary training with this confusing summary of a difficult period must, if he has any native sense, discover its futility when he proceeds to the first essay on Meredith.[2] Here he will perceive that his wrestling with one generality does not assist him in conquering the next. For he is abruptly informed that Meredith's "success in intellectualizing the novel had far-reaching influence" [19]. He knows by this time that there was a National Insurance Act,[3] but he cannot be assumed to know what a novel is, or how it can be and why it should be intellectualized, or indeed what intellect is, and probably he has quite erroneous ideas of what influence is; nevertheless, he learns that Meredith's success in intellectualizing the novel had far-reaching influence. "No religious difficulties interfered with Meredith's frank acceptance of the theory of evolution" [21]. The young person may not know what the theory of evolution is, or which theory of evolution Meredith accepted, but he understands that,

whatever it was, Meredith swallowed it. "It is in the drawing of characters, especially of women, that Meredith excelled" [30]. Here the honest apprentice will perhaps ask himself whether nearly all great novelists do not in some way excel in the drawing of characters, and whether the difference is not in the style of the drawing; he will not have to have read very much to arrive at this reflection. And if he is very honest indeed, he will be aware of his complete perplexity at a passage like the following:

> [Meredith] continued, both in poetry and fiction, the intellectual tradition which had been established by Browning and George Eliot, and he avoided some of their errors, lacked some of their shortcomings. He is never heavy-handed, arrogant, or dull. In prose and verse alike he was a cunning craftsman, seeking ever to renew the life of our much-travailed English tongue in word, phrase, and metre. [36][4]

He will wonder at least what exactly was the intellectual tradition established by Browning and George Eliot, what craftsmanship is and how it differs from art. And perhaps Professor Cunliffe, who is the author of a monograph on the influence of Seneca on the Elizabethan drama, understands fully how a language lives and dies and is renewed, but the majority even of adults are only just aware that such phenomena do occur, and are not able to distinguish the living from the dead.[5]

So we advance from Meredith to Hardy, and on to Shaw and Wells and Bennett, to the Irish Movement, finally to the New Poets and the New Novelists. Some of the essays, by themselves, are not without merit: merely to have included Gissing is a merit, and the sketch of his life does throw a little light upon that unfortunate Lodger at Maze Pond.[6] The essay on Conrad, too, is meritorious; it touches seriously one or two matters of literary art. And each essay is rounded by a bibliography.

It would hardly be worth while to devote much attention to this book if the book did not somehow represent the whole method of popular culture; if it did not illustrate the way in which a large part of the half-educated public, and by no means the stupidest part, devours and is encouraged to devour literature; the part of the larger public which does not merely read, but wishes to improve itself; which goes to courses of popular lectures and often hears the sort of statement that Mr. Cunliffe prints: general observations that neither induce thought nor stimulate feelings. The population of which I speak does not include many subscribers to book-clubs of current novels; it exists in rather larger numbers in the North than in the

South of England; it supports strongly the Everyman Library and other cheap editions.[7] This public can thrill to such sentences as Mr. Cunliffe's:

> [Meredith] attacked, in men and women alike, sentimentalism, which he defines as "ignoble passion playing with fire." For passion, "noble strength on fire," he evokes our sympathy, and for courage and devotion. Above all he pleads for the use of intelligence, of human reason . . . He sought in his novels, as he does in the "Ode to the Comic Spirit" . . . to make the relations between men and women more rational and more spiritual. . . . It was in this spirit that he made egotism in its myriad forms the object of his shafts of wit. . . . For the enthusiasms of youth he had keen sympathy. . . . [34-5][8]

Obviously it is wrong to allow people to think that they can learn anything about literature or life or writing from phrases such as these. But what instruction, or whether any instruction in taste is possible. . . . One can protest that this does not matter. Nevertheless, these people make profitable the cheap editions which we sometimes are glad to buy, and if they were a little better educated we might have cheap editions of a number of English classics which are hardly to be seen outside of the British Museum.

At all events, the instructor has a course which he can follow: he can point to good literature and then be silent. He can select and present the necessary and interesting facts (only he must he quite positive as to what is a fact, a hard one), and then he can indicate what work is good, and what is good in a different way; his pointing must be orderly and precise. The first step in education is not a love of literature, but a passionate admiration for some one writer; and probably most of us, recalling our intellectual pubescence, can confess that it was an unexpected contact with some one book or poem which first, by apparent accident, revealed to us our capacities for enjoyment of literature. The mind of a boy of fourteen may be deadened by Shakespeare, and may burst into life on collision with Omar or the Blessed Damozel.[9] And none of our tutors could have guessed what piece of printed book would precipitate this crisis.

But if this is fortuitous, the education of taste beyond this, while always more or less deliberate, can only be assisted and not guided by another person. Taste is not a gusto for one author, and it is not, as text-books like Mr. Cunliffe's often imply, a gusto for a dozen authors. It is not a correct theory either, the apprehension of which should supply infallible evidence of values. While we may of course, and must in fact, make theories more or less,

explain our feelings to ourselves and others: still our theories are, like Mr. Santayana's "consciousness," only a phosphorescence.[10] Taste begins and ends in feeling. Sometimes it is thought that taste is a weak derivative of enthusiasm. What taste is, I suppose, is an organization of immediate experiences obtained in literature, which is individually modified in its shape by the points of concentration of our strongest feelings, the authors who have affected us most strongly and deeply. It cannot be had without effort, and without it, our likings remain insignificant accidents. To be immediately and without effort pleased by Donne is easy for some people, to be in the same way moved by Shelley is easy for others; the difficulty lies in that process which is not of abstract thought, but which is an organization of feeling, making possible, not only to appreciate Shelley in one mood and Donne in another, but the inclusion of even greater diversity into a system of perception and feeling. The *Apperzeptionsmass* thus acquired is something of a test for anything new that appears.[11]

In Mr. Cunliffe's book there is no organization visible. Perhaps he conscientiously avoids both impressions and theory as too personal for his pedagogical purpose.

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. Likely composed circa 15 June, when TSE wrote to Mary Hutchinson: "I have been occupied on another of my furiously labored articles, perhaps the most labored of the lot" (*L1* 361). J. W. Cunliffe (1865-1946) was professor of English and associate director of the School of Journalism at Columbia University.

2. TSE wrote to Eleanor Hinkley on 1 Apr 1918 that George Meredith, whose work he had taught in his 1916-17 Extension courses, "knew what he was doing, but unfortunately it wasn't worth doing, don't read him" (*L1* 259).

3. The National Insurance Act was proposed by David Lloyd George and approved by the British Parliament in 1911.

4. TSE's brackets.

5. TSE later returned to Cunliffe's *The Influence of Seneca on Elizabethan Tragedy: An Essay* (1893) in his "Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca" (1927) and "Seneca in Elizabethan Translation" (1927), in which he calls it "the most useful of all books" on the topic (*SE* 76-77).

6. Cunliffe suggests that English novelist George Gissing (1857-1903) possessed a weakness of judgment that resembled that of Harvey Munden, the unhappy protagonist of Gissing's story "A Lodger in Maze Pond" (1895).

7. The Everyman's Library was founded by J. M. Dent in 1906 to reprint world classics in inexpensive editions; TSE owned numerous editions and regularly assigned them to students of his Extension lectures. Shortly after TSE began traveling to northern England to give his Extension lectures in Yorkshire, Vivien wrote to his brother about her family friends in nearby

Lancashire: "They are most dreadful people really – very *very* rich manufacturing people – so provincial that my American friends tell me they are very much like Americans!! Tom has just met a few at Ilkley (in Yorkshire) when he went for his first lecture – and *he* says the same – he was struck with how much more like Americans they are than the South of England people" (*L1* 169).

8. TSE's brackets. Cunliffe draws both phrases (the first of which is misquoted; for "ignoble passion playing with fire," *read*: "ignoble weakness dallying with fire") from James Thomson's remarks about Meredith in "Notes on the Genius of Robert Browning," *Biographical and Critical Studies* (London: Reeves and Turner, 1896), 450.

9. TSE offers similar reflections in the "Note on the Development of 'Taste' in Poetry," admitting that "the only pleasure that I got from Shakespeare was the pleasure of being commended for reading him" and recalling his discovery, "at the age of fourteen or so," of *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám* in Edward Fitzgerald's translation (1859), and shortly thereafter the verse of Rossetti, author of "The Blessed Damozel" (1850) (*UPUC* 25).

10. George Santayana refers to the "countless scintillas of consciousness" on the first page of *The Life of Reason*, vol 1 (New York: Scribner's, 1905), which TSE recommended with reservation to Sidney Schiff on 4 Aug 1920: "I have never liked Santayana myself, . . . But still I think one ought to read *Reason in Common Sense* or one other volume" (*L1* 483). Santayana later wrote in *Soliloquies in England and Later Soliloquies* (London: Constable, 1922) that "truth is not itself luminous, as wit is; the truth travels silently in the night and requires to be caught by the searchlight of wit to become visible. Meantime the mind plays innocently with its own phosphorescence, which is what we call culture" (44). TSE may recall the idea from the two undergraduate courses that he took with Santayana at Harvard.

11. *Apperzeptionsmass*: apperceptive mass. In his *Lehrbuch zur Psychologie [A Textbook in Psychology]* (1816), philosopher and psychologist Johann Friedrich Herbart uses the term to refer to the actively acquired background of ideas and experiences that allows the individual mind to perceive and distinguish a new experience. Herbart was Kant's successor as chair of philosophy at Königsberg and founder of the discipline of pedagogy; TSE may have encountered his work through William James, who discusses Herbart's concept in *Talks to Teachers on Psychology* (1899) and mentions it at the conclusion of lecture 9, "Conversion," in *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902).

Reflections on Contemporary Poetry [IV][1]

A review of *Naked Warriors*, by Herbert Read

London: Art and Letters, 1919. Pp. 60.

The Charnel Rose, Senlin: A Biography, and Other Poems

by Conrad Aiken

Boston: Four Seas Press, 1918. Pp. 156.

vingt-cinq poèmes, by Tristan Tzara

Zurich: Collection Dada, 1918. Pp. 20.

The Egoist, 6 (July 1919) 39-40

It is not true that the development of a writer is a function of his development as a man, but it is possible to say that there is a close analogy between the sort of experience which develops a man and the sort of experience which develops a writer. Experience in living may leave the literary embryo still dormant, and the progress of literary development may to a considerable extent take place in a soul left immature in living. But similar types of experience form the nourishment of both. There is a kind of stimulus for a writer which is more important than the stimulus of admiring another writer. Admiration leads most often to imitation, we can seldom remain long unconscious of our imitating another, and the awareness of our debt naturally leads us to hatred of the object imitated. If we stand toward a writer in this other relation of which I speak we do not imitate him, and though we are quite as likely to be accused of it, we are quite unperturbed by the charge. This relation is a feeling of profound kinship, or rather of a peculiar personal intimacy, with another, probably a dead author. It may overcome us suddenly, on first or after long acquaintance; it is certainly a crisis; and when a young writer is seized with his first passion of this sort he may be changed, metamorphosed almost, within a few weeks even; from a bundle of second-hand sentiments into a person. The imperative intimacy arouses for the first time a real, an unshakeable confidence. That you possess this secret knowledge, this intimacy, with the dead man, that after few

or many years or centuries you should have appeared, with this indubitable claim to distinction; who can penetrate at once the thick and dusty circumlocutions about his reputation, can call yourself alone his friend; it is something more than *encouragement* to you. It is a cause of development, like personal relations in life. Like personal intimacies in life, it may and probably will pass, but it will be ineffaceable.

The usefulness of such a passion is various. For one thing it secures us against forced admiration, from attending to writers simply because they are great. We are never at ease with people who, to us, are merely great. We are not ourselves great enough for that: probably not one man in each generation is great enough to be intimate with Shakespeare. Admiration for the great is only a sort of discipline to keep us in order, a necessary snobbism to make us mind our places. We may not be great lovers; but if we had a genuine affair with a real poet of any degree we have acquired a monitor to avert us when we are not in love. Indirectly, there are other acquisitions: our friendship gives us an introduction to the society in which our friend moved; we learn its origins and its endings; we are broadened. We do not imitate, we are changed; and our work is the work of the changed man; we have not borrowed, we have been quickened, and we become bearers of a tradition.

I feel that the traces of this sort of experience are conspicuously lacking from contemporary poetry, and that contemporary poetry is deficient in tradition. We can raise no objection to "experiments" if the experimenters are qualified; but we can object that almost none of the experimenters hold fast to anything permanent under the varied phenomena of experiment. Shakespeare was one of the slowest, if one of the most persistent, of experimenters; even Rimbaud shows process. And one never has the tremendous satisfaction of meeting a writer who is more original, more independent, than he himself knows. No dead voices speak through the living voice; no reincarnation, no re-creation. Not even the *saturation* which sometimes combusts spontaneously into originality.

> fly where men feel
> The cunning axletree: and those that suffer
> Beneath the chariot of the snowy Bear[2]

is beautiful; and the beauty only appears more substantial if we conjecture that Chapman may have absorbed the recurring phrase of Seneca in

signum celsi glaciale poli
septem stellis Arcados ursae
lucem verso termone vocat . . .

sub cardine
glacialis ursae . . .[3]

a union, at a point at least, of the Tudor and the Greek through the Senecan phrase.

In the books of verse I have undertaken to examine, this fertilisation is not very apparent. Mr. Read's book is on a very high level of war poetry.[4] It is the best war poetry that I can remember having seen. It is better than the rest because it is more honest; because it is neither Romance nor Reporting; because it is unpretentious; and it has emotion as well as a version of things seen. For a poet to observe that war is ugly and not on the whole glorious or improving to the soul is not a novelty any more: but Mr. Read does it with a quiet and careful conviction which is not very common. His vision surpasses his ear; and he has, I guess, been impressed – how could he escape it? – by Wyndham Lewis, who is a visual and only occasionally an auditory writer.[5] Mr. Read is handicapped by his imperfection of musical sense, in the production of *tone*: the effect that is to say, is a succession of effects of ideas and images, rather than the sharp and indefinable effect of the poem as a whole. Nevertheless, "The Happy Warrior" and parts of "Kneeshaw Goes to War," and particularly the prose sketch at the end,[6] are decidedly successful.

M. Tristan Tzara, whose book bears the impression of the Collection Dada in Zurich, is very different.[7] He goes in for tones, rather minor ones, and sometimes gets them, though at the vast sacrifice of everything else. He has assembled a kind of something which has the odd distinction of being neither verse nor prose nor prose-poem; his *tic-tac débile* is agreeably competent.[8] This one opens rather pleasantly:

froid tourbillon zigzag de sang
je suis sans âme cascade sans
amis et sans talents seigneur
Je ne reçois pas régulièrement les
lettres de ma mère
qui doivent passer par la russie
par la norvège et par l'angleterre . . .[9]

but at times he becomes difficult to follow:

> Bonjour sans cigarette tzantzantza
> ganga
> bouzdouc zdouc nfoùnfa mbaah . . .[10]

The only way to take this sort of thing is very seriously, and I have got the impression that M. Tzara is rather clever. At least it is a symptom of "experiment," and ought not to be put in the hands of the young. M. Tzara's work does not appear to have very deep roots in the literature of any nation.

A third violent contrast is Mr. Conrad Aiken. He has written several books of verse, and is pretty well known in America.[11] He has the distinction of believing in the long poem, and of having worked through and abandoned several forms of the long poem which he has probably perceived to be obsolete. He has discarded the Masefield poem;[12] we infer from this that he has perceived that the older fashioned narrative poem cannot be taken seriously when it has Henry James or Tchekov to compete with in prose. "Senlin: a biography" can be read carefully and advantageously to see what Mr. Aiken is attempting on his borderline of the subliminal. It cannot be said quite to succeed, and its Condor twilight is unsatisfying after the sharper outlines of Mr. Read's vision.[13] Mr. Aiken has gone in for psycho-analysis with a Swinburnian equipment; and he does not escape the fatal American introspectiveness; he is oversensitive and worried. He is tangled in himself. The effect is of immaturity of feeling, not at all at any lack of it. It is difficult for a writer to mature in America. This is a pity; if Mr. Aiken were not so isolated, if he was in contact with European civilisation, he might go so very much farther;[14] his attempt is more impressive than many English successes.

One ought properly at this point to revert to the question of tradition, and to the consideration of what, in the developing and maturing of verse, changes and what remains the same.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. For the previous parts of this series in the *Egoist*, see "Reflections on Contemporary Poetry, I" (1.573), "Reflections on Contemporary Poetry [II]" (1.594), and "Reflections on Contemporary Poetry [III]" (1.608). This was to be the final installment. Here, as in the previous installments, the titles of books under review were given in footnotes rather than in the heading; Tzara's *vingt-cinq poèmes* was not noted.

2. *Bussy D'Ambois* (1607) V.iv.103-05, by dramatist George Chapman (1559-1634); TSE's 1904 Mermaid edition misprints "cunning axle-tree" for "burning axle-tree." *George Chapman*, ed. W. L. Phelps (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1895), 216. Cf. *Burnt Norton*: "the bedded axle-tree" (*CPP* 118).

3. *Trans*: "the icy sign high in the north, the Bears of Arcas, with their seven stars, with wheeling pole summons the dawn"; "beneath the wheeling course of the frozen Bear." Seneca, *Hercules Furens*, ll. 129-31, 1139-40. *Seneca's Tragedies*, trans. Frank Justus Miller, 2 vols (London: Heinemann, 1917), 1: 15, 99. TSE later adapted these lines in "Gerontion" ("whirled / Beyond the circuit of the shuddering Bear") (*CPP* 23) and used the line that directly precedes them in *Hercules furens* – "Quis hic locus, quae regio, quae mundi plaga?" (line 1138) – as an epigraph to "Marina."

4. TSE first met Herbert Read (1893-1968) in 1917, while Read, an officer, was on leave in London to receive the Military Cross. After being awarded the Distinguished Service Order the next year, Read left the military and became a frequent correspondent with TSE and a regular contributor to the *Criterion*. "Here is my gory war-book," Read wrote when he sent *Naked Warriors* to TSE, who responded on 26 Mar 1919: "I like it. I read most of it on the train this morning, and when I have read it again I should like to discuss it with you" (*L1* 329).

5. TSE admired Lewis's paintings and the visual elements of his novel, *Tarr*, in which he discerned "evidences of a draughtsman's training," including "the special reaction to vision and especially the development of the tactile sense" (1.745). Lewis served in WWI and completed two large war paintings, *A Canadian Gun Pit* (1918) and *A Battery Shelled* (1919) while he was an official war artist to the Canadian Corps Headquarters. "His drawings," TSE told Sydney Schiff in a letter of 24 Mar 1920, "have a *classical* quality, give me a conviction of permanence, that even his best writing does not" (*L1* 454).

6. "Killed in Action," which Read explains is "a chapter from an unfinished novel" (48).

7. More than fifteen publications by principal Dadaists like Romanian-born poet Tristan Tzara (born Samuel Rosenfeld, 1896-1963) and Richard Huelsenbeck bore the imprint "Collection Dada," in lieu of the various publishers' names, in the attempt to signal their common Dadaist affiliation and remain free from the restrictions imposed by any single publishing house.

8. *Tic-tac débile*: feeble tick-tock. From the conclusion of Emile Verhaeren's "Fleur fatale" [Fatal Flower] (*Les Soirs*, 1888): "L'inconscience douce et le tic-tac débile / De la tranquille mort des fous, je l'entends bien!" [The sweet unconsciousness and the feeble tick-tock / Of the quiet death of madmen, I hear it well!].

9. *Trans*: "cold whirlwind bloody zigzag / I'm soulless friendless brainless waterfall lord / I don't get letters regularly from my mother / that must come through russia norway or england." Trans. Lee Harwood, *Chanson Dada* (Boston: Black Widow Press, 2005), 36. The opening lines of "la grande complainte de mon obscurité un" ["the great lament over my obscurity, one"] in *vingt-cinq poèmes* (8).

10. *Trans*: "good morning without a cigarette tzantzantza / ganga / boozdouc zdooc nfoonfa mbaah" *Chanson Dada* (34). From "le géant blanc lépreux du paysage" ["the white leprous giant in the countryside"], *vingt-cinq poèmes* (1). TSE quotes these lines again in "Modern Tendencies in Poetry" and reveals that he received *vingt-cinq poèmes* directly from Tzara (220).

11. TSE met Conrad Aiken (1889-1973), who became a lifelong correspondent, in 1909 at Harvard when they served together on the board of the *Advocate*. By 1919 Aiken had published four volumes of poetry, beginning with *Earth Triumphant and Other Tales in Verse* in 1914. He finished "The Charnel Rose," the first in a series of long poems, by Nov 1915, though its publication was preceded by the second volume of the projected series, *The Jig of Forslin* (1916).

12. Aiken later admitted that the influence of John Masefield's narrative poems – like *The Everlasting Mercy* (1911) and *The Widow in the Bye Street* (1912) – had been "present at the very outset" but that it did not endure past his second volume, *Turns and Movies* (1916). *Selected Letters of Conrad Aiken*, ed. Joseph Killorin (New Haven: Yale UP, 1978), 145.

13. TSE likely refers to Charles Conder (1868-1909), British fin-de-siècle painter whose impressionistic works include "The Melbourne Twilight" (1889), "Twilight in a Garden, Algiers" (1890), and "Crépuscule" (1901). Aiken's protagonist, Senlin, longs to hear "waves far off in a pale rose twilight / Crash on a white sand shore" (31). After reading Aiken's next volume, *The House of Dust* (1920), TSE told Scofield Thayer, "it appears to me that the workmen called in to build this house were Swinburne and myself; the Dust being provided by Conrad" (*L1* 510).

14. Aiken, whose home was in Savannah, Georgia, had visited TSE in Paris in the summer of 1911. Afterward, their conversations at Harvard returned repeatedly to the subject of living abroad: "what did we talk about?" Aiken later recalled, "What to write of course . . . and perhaps more concernedly, where to live, and how. Europe? And if so London, or Paris? Could one successfully lay siege to either and how should one go about it?" *T. S. Eliot: A Symposium*, 22. Aiken visited England briefly in 1914 before TSE's arrival and moved there with his family in the fall of 1921.

A Foreign Mind

A review of *The Cutting of an Agate*, by W. B. Yeats

London: Macmillan, 1919. Pp. vii+ 224.

The Athenaeum, 4653 (4 July 1919) 552-53

This book of collected essays and prefaces might be used as the text for an historical summary of the Irish Movement, or of the Abbey Theatre, or as the text for a disquisition upon the art of drama, or for a number of other inquiries with which we are already familiar.[1] But the focus of all these topics is unquestionably Mr. Yeats himself; the question even whether Irish Literature exists is more manageable as a question of the form of existence enjoyed by Mr. Yeats. Whatever Mr. Yeats's influence may have been, and however remote from his own the natures that have been exposed to it, Mr. Yeats has spent altogether a great deal of time in England and acquired here a degree of notoriety without being or becoming an Englishman.[2] If there is a peculiar Irish genius, it ought to be discovered in him; and if we can reach any conclusions about him, they ought to illuminate our understanding of Irish Literature.

Mr. Yeats, more than any of the subjects that have engaged his attention, is what engages our attention in this book. When we read it we are confirmed in the conviction – confirmed in a baffling and disturbing conviction – that its author, as much in his prose as in his verse, is not "of this world" – *this* world, of course, being our visible planet with whatever our theology or myth may conceive as below or above it. And Mr. Yeats's cosmos is not a French world, certainly. The difference between his world and ours is so complete as to seem almost a physiological variety, different nerves and senses. It is, therefore, allowable to imagine that the difference is not only personal, but national. If it were merely personal, it might be located, attached to ourselves as some eccentricity of our nature; but Mr. Yeats is not an eccentric. He eludes that kind of relationship to the comprehensible. Everywhere the difference is slight, but thorough. For when we say "not of this world," we do not point to another. Ghosts, mediums, leprechauns, sprites, are only a few of the elements in Mr. Yeats's population, and in this volume they hardly appear at all. Mr. Yeats cannot be localized as a *rond de cuir* of séances.[3]

When an Englishman explores the mysteries of the Cabala, one knows one's opinion of him, but Mr. Yeats on any subject is a cause of bewilderment and distress. The sprites are not unacceptable, but Mr. Yeats's daily world, the world which admits these monsters without astonishment, which views them more familiarly than Commercial Road views a Lascar – this is the unknown and unknowable.[4] Mr. Yeats's mind is a mind in some way independent of experience; and anything that occurs in that mind is of equal importance. It is a mind in which perception of fact, and feeling and thinking are all a little different from ours. In Mr. Yeats's verse, in particular, the qualities can by no means be defined as mere attenuations and faintnesses. When it is compared with the work of any English bard of apparently equivalent thinness, the result is that the English work in question *is* thin; you can point to something which it ought to be and is not; but of Mr. Yeats you cannot say finally that he lacks feeling. He does not pretend to more feeling than he has, perhaps he has a great deal; it is not feeling that standards can measure as passionate or insipid.

Every reader of Gibbon is acquainted with the existence of one heretical sect, among the several which disturbed the fifth century, which the historian names the *fantastic*, condemned by the orthodox as well as by the Nestorians and Monophysites.[5] This party of philosophers held that the visible Jesus, who grew to manhood and mixed with mankind, was a phantasm; at a certain moment the son of God assumed by the banks of Jordan full-grown the similitude of humanity. He was not really incarnate, but divinely deceived the world; and controversy foamed about the question whether such a doctrine did not impeach divinity with the sin of lying. Mr. Yeats might be such a fantastic avatar; supported by adepts and narthekophoroi,[6] controversy might rage again about the question whether Mr. Yeats really feels and thinks, or whether the deception, if it is the case, is derogatory to his divinity. As with the fantastic God, we do not see either his thought or his feeling grow out of human experience. He seems, in his disembodied way, to happen on thoughts, thoughts of "wisdom," and if we are not convinced, it is because we do not see by what right he comes by them. When he affirms, for instance, that

> the praise of all but an equal enslaves and adds a pound to the ball at the ankle with every compliment, [81]

does he really quite know what he is saying? Though if Montaigne or Goethe made such an assertion, the sentence would carry great weight. In

the delightful and wise letters of Mr. J. B. Yeats there are many sentences, even pages like this, and as of his son, we wonder what pain of experience gave him the knowledge: he did not, we presume, get it from books, and if from experience, from an experience unlike ours.[7]

From dreams, perhaps? The word "dream" occurs so significantly as to be almost a keyword with Mr. Yeats. Of art he says:

> All art is dream, and what the day is done with is dreaming ripe, and what art has moulded religion accepts, and in the end all is in the wine cup, all is in the drunken fantasy, and the grapes begin to stammer. [93]

But what is the import of such a comprehensive definition? If it is said, in a particular sense, that Mr. Yeats's art is a dream, there is, correctly or not, a meaning; and we know further that it is a different dreaminess from that of, say, William Morris. The latter is surely a dream told to amuse the waking and quite solid Englishman; in divers ways, the strangeness of Blake or of Poe is continuous with normal mentality; but Mr. Yeats's dream is identical with Mr. Yeats's reality. *His* dream is a qualification or continuation of himself, and it is natural consequently that he should seek to circumscribe all art within this orbit. Mr. Yeats says that

> The end of art is the ecstasy awakened by the presence before an ever-changing mind of what is permanent in the world, or by the arousing of that mind itself into the very delicate and fastidious mood habitual with it when it is seeking those permanent and recurring things. [95-96]

Why introduce the mind? why not say – the recognition of the permanent in the changing, and the recognition of the protean identity of the permanent with the changing? If we are too busy with the ecstasy and the mood we shall have *La Princesse Maleine* instead of *Macbeth* – and Mr. Yeats does indeed call M. Maeterlinck a "subtle" writer![8] And is the "presence before an ever-changing mind of what is permanent," is this the dream, the stammer of the grapes? A page later, we learn that the poet

> should be content to find his pleasure in all that is forever passing away that it may come again, in the beauty of woman, in the fragile flowers of spring, in momentary heroic passion, in whatever is most fleeting, most impassioned, as it were, for its own perfection, most eager to return to its own glory. [97]

It is a style of Pater, with a trick of the eye and a hanging of the nether lip that come from across the Irish Channel, all the more seductive. Mr. Yeats sometimes appears, as a philosopher of aesthetics, incoherent. But all of his observations are quite consistent with his personality, with his remoteness. His remoteness is not an escape from the world, for he is innocent of any world to escape from; his procedure is blameless, but he does not start where we do. His mind is, in fact, extreme in egoism, and, as often with egoism, remains a little crude; crude, indeed, as from its remoteness one would expect. There is something of this crudity, and much of this egoism, about what is called Irish Literature: the egoism which obstructs from facing, and the crudity which remains through not having had to face direct contacts. We know also of an evasion, or rather an evacuation of reality by the very civilized; but people civilized to that extent are seldom artists, and Mr. Yeats is always an artist. His crudity and egoism are present in other writers who are Irish; justified by exploitation to the point of greatness, in the later work of Mr. James Joyce. Mr. Joyce's mind is subtle, erudite, even massive; but it is not like Stendhal's, an instrument continually tempering and purifying emotion; it operates within the medium, the superb current, of his feeling. The basis is pure feeling, and if the feeling of Mr. Yeats were equally powerful, it would also justify his thought. Very powerful feeling *is* crude; the fault of Mr. Yeats's is that it is crude without being powerful. The weakness of his prose is similar to that of his verse. The trouble is not that it is inconsistent, illogical or incoherent, but that the objects upon which it is directed are not fixed; as in his portraits of Synge and several other Irishmen, we do not seem to get the men themselves before us, but feelings of Mr. Yeats projected.[9] It must always be granted that in verse at least Mr. Yeats's feeling is not simply crudeness and egoism, but that it has a positive, individual and permanent quality.

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. Yeats begins the preface to this revised English edition of *The Cutting of an Agate* (the American edition of which appeared in 1912) by invoking "the company of Irish players who now have their stage at the Abbey Theatre" and all others who are also part of "the movement of events which is creating a new Ireland" (v). TSE focused on these topics in his 1917-18 tutorial class, when he taught the work of Yeats, Synge, and Lady Gregory and lectured on the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, which had opened on 27 Dec 1904 (1.591-92).

2. TSE met Yeats in London through Pound in Mar 1915. "The last time I was here," he wrote in a letter from London on 4 Apr 1915, "I had the pleasure of meeting Yeats: he is now in Ireland . . . I am hoping for his return – he is a very agreeable talker" (*L1* 103).

3. *rond de cuir*: "pen-pusher" or secretary. Yeats describes one of his experiences at a séance in the closing pages of *Reveries over Childhood and Youth* (1916). In Mar 1917, TSE reported attending a meeting of Roger Fry's Omega Workshop where he spent the evening "discussing psychical research with William Butler Yeats (the only thing he ever talks about, except Dublin gossip)" (*L1* 186). And in a brief review of Yeats's *Per Amica Silentia Lunae* (1917), he admitted: "there is no one else living whom one would endure on the subject of gnomes, hobgoblins, and astral bodies" (1.724-25).

4. London's heavily trafficked Commercial Road – originally financed by the East India Dock Company for the transfer of their imports – was home to a great number of native Indian sailors and deckhands to whom the British often referred as "lascars."

5. Gibbon gives an account of what he calls the "*fantastic* system" of the Docetae ("Illusionists") or docetes – a second-century Christian group who held that Christ's human body was merely an appearance – in the forty-seventh chapter of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, which TSE had been reading "over and over – when I have time to read at all" (*L1* 379). The Nestorians and Monophysites, whom Gibbon chronicles as well, were two early heretical sects formed in the controversy over similar Christological questions.

6. *narthekophoroi*: "thyrsus-bearer"; in ancient Orphism, a worshipper of Dionysus. The term appears in Plato's *Phaedo* (69d), but TSE may also have been reminded of it by Walter Pater, who quotes the proverb from which it comes in *Plato and Platonism* (London: Macmillan, 1893), 87.

7. TSE reviewed J. B. Yeats's letters for the *Egoist* in 1917 and similarly speculated about his strange detachment: "if we wished to pigeon-hole it conveniently we could call it Irish: but it is Mr. Yeats himself" (1.551).

8. Maeterlinck's first play, *La Princesse Maleine* (1889), is set in a northern kingdom in a feudal past and draws upon themes in both *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*, the two plays to which it was compared in the 1890 *Figaro* review that launched Maeterlinck's career. In "Personality and the Intellectual Essences," Yeats suggests that the symbolists' emphasis on essences and states of mind have taken literature "upward into ever-growing subtlety, with Verhaeren, with Mallarmé, with Maeterlinck" (59).

9. Yeats offers his firsthand account of John Millington Synge (1871-1909) in "Preface to the First Edition of John M. Synge's Poems and Translations" and "J. M. Synge and the Ireland of his Time." TSE taught Synge's *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907) in the unit of his 1917-18 tutorial class devoted to the "Nineties" (1.591).

The Romantic Generation, If It Existed

A review of *Currents and Eddies in the English Romantic Generation*, by Frederick E. Pierce

New Haven: Yale UP; London: Milford, 1918. Pp. 342.

The Athenaeum, 4655 (18 July 1919) 616-17

To anyone who is interested to know what a past generation liked, and why they liked it, a book of careful and intelligent scholarship such as Mr. Pierce's is instructive.[1] It is illuminating to learn that the Great Foreign Dramatist of 1800 was – Kotzebue; that the Epics of Southey were confidently expected by educated men of letters to compete with those of – Milton and Klopstock; that Dante was altogether unacceptable in England until he was carried over by the strong wave of Ariosto, Boiardo and Pulci.[2] Mr. Pierce's patient accumulation of little facts suggests many questions of general importance, and perhaps provides answers to some of the questions. It exhibits the Romantic Period as a period of intellectual chaos; it leads us to speculate whether the age, as an age, can ever exert much influence upon any age to come; and it provokes the suspicion that our own age may be similarly chaotic and ineffectual.

The period 1788-1832 was a period hungry for novelty; and its hunger exceeded its strength of digestion. When we remember the Ossianic (or Neo-Celtic) bubble, the Rowley poems, the *Castle of Otranto*, we must put the date earlier.[3] The latter part of the eighteenth century was a period of intellectual and emotional debility: what we mean by the phrase "eighteenth century" is really a synopsis of the best in literature, art and society for a hundred years. The food of 1790 was the sonnets of Charlotte Smith, the sonnets of Coleridge's "divine Bowles"; Cowper's *Task*; the *Louisa* of Anne Seward, the Swan of Lichfield.[4] To a public ignorant of other provender than this, the feeblest emotion, when it appeared, might seem strong, and the falsest emotion might seem genuine. But the sentiment of the eighteenth century continued; and as we pass from Ann Radcliffe and Rogers to Moore and to Byron's early romances there is no interruption of feeling.[5] In the work of Rogers we find the link connecting the pernicious sentiment

of the eighteenth with that of the nineteenth century; connecting Gray[6†] and Goldsmith with Byron:

> the stern grandeur of a Gothic tower . . .
>
> All, all escaped – but ere the lover bore
> His faint and faded Julia to the shore . . .
>
> But can the wiles of Art, the grasp of Power,
> Snatch the rich relics of a well-spent hour? . . .[7]

Such lines recall either "Childe Harold" or the "Country Churchyard." At the end of the eighteenth century there were already several distinct groups of *literati*: there was the Scotch group, with Edinburgh as its capital, and Scott soon to be its head; there was the Holland House or fashionable-literary group; and there was the Cottle group in Bristol, consisting of Coleridge, Southey and Wordsworth. The Scotch group was antiquarian, and collected Border Ballads; it continued, with greater accuracy, the mediaevalism of Walpole and Mrs. Radcliffe.[8] The Holland House group, gathered about Lord Holland and Charles Fox, was urban; it managed to combine the tradition of Pope with the mediaeval, the Werther melancholic, and the Near East romantic; it was also neo-classic, and its Laureate Rogers imitated the Parthenon frieze around his staircase.[9] It probably provided the best conversation. The Bristol group is defined in its interests by the preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*; it read Rousseau, was excited by the French Revolution, admired Schiller and Goethe, Herder, Bürger and Klopstock.[10] Through Southey it was also in contact with Taylor of Norwich (mentioned in *Lavengro*), the great popularizer of German literature.[11]

These three groups comprise nearly everybody of importance up to about 1815. In none of them is there enough to mark a revolution from the later eighteenth century – neither the earlier Scott nor the earlier Byron (who may be associated loosely with the Holland House group); and the only figure of continuing influence is Wordsworth. After 1815 a new group – London, middle-class, but reaching toward Italy – appears around Leigh Hunt. There for the first time were musicians; also painters, though no better than Haydon and Severn; there were Hazlitt, Lamb, Shelley, Keats, Cowden Clarke, even Peacock. They inhabited Hampstead and Highgate; they admired the Elgin marbles; they listened at the Portuguese Chapel to Mozart and the Gregorian chants.[12] They were the first to part company

from eighteenth century; and they did it less by their avowed rejection of Pope than by their genuine uncritical admiration for the Elizabethans. Keats, for instance, may appear to us, and in contrast to the Elizabethans, sentimental; but the sentimentality of *Isabella* or *St. Agnes* is not a pure descendant from the eighteenth century.[13] Neither the *Lyrical Ballads* nor the romances of Moore and Byron nor the Epics of Southey are wholly alien to the eighteenth century. But Keats and the later Shelley were at least different.

And yet this was not a period; or two periods. Not that it was deficient either in feeling or in brains. It produced the *Cenci*, and it produced that wakeful and wasteful mind of Coleridge which wasted its metaphysical sleep on Highgate Hill.[14] But we cannot overlook the fact that four of the greatest minds – great in different degrees and kinds – remained apart from the general ideas of the time, and shared little or not at all in the time's approval. Crabbe, Blake, Landor and Jane Austen are precisely the spirits who should have guided and informed the period of transition from the eighteenth century; they all preserved the best formal or intellectual tradition of that century, and they are all not only original but unique. But the generation after 1830 preferred to form itself upon decadence, though a decadence of genius: Wordsworth; and upon an immaturity, though an immaturity of genius: Keats and Shelley; and the development of English literature was retarded.

> The languid strings do scarcely move,
> The sound is forced, the notes are few.[15]

Moreover, with all the activity of groups that Mr. Pierce skilfully displays to us, the Romantic Generation in England attained no unity of temper in any sympathy of society and art, and no unity of expression in any individual. The minds most worthy to exercise influence remained apart; the younger men of letters circulated among each other in the suburbs, with no better or stronger living influence upon them than Leigh Hunt; and Holland House, after some of the best men, whom it had not known, were dead, still went on talking to itself. The years 1790-1830 leave us no distinct social character; and for an individual who resumes in himself all of the time's moods and ideas we have to go to another country. Whatever our opinion of Goethe's permanence as an artist, there is no doubt whatever about his permanence as a representative, as the articulate voice of forty years. Goethe's mind was an exceptionally sensitive collector of vibrations;

there was no influence throughout those years that it did not register and absorb. Perhaps minds like his, because of their omnivorous digestion, lack something of intensity and fineness; and possibly it is the Goethe of the Conversations with Eckermann who will survive the longest.[16] But in Germany, through Goethe and some of Schumann's music,[17] the Romantic Movement (I mean the Romantic Movement of these years, and not Romanticism in general) achieves the dignity of a phase in the changing personality of history. It is something, for instance, to have expressed the romantic "Drang nach Italien" of those years in a single poem:

Im dunkeln Laub die Gold-Orangen glühn. . .[18]

Goethe was a conscious romanticist, *aware* of the period as none of the Englishmen was aware of it; and even though he had sometimes to make himself ridiculous, he knew what he was after, in *Werther* and *Wilhelm Meister*, in *Iphigenie*, in *Faust*, in his studies in natural history, his speculations on colour, his (rather bad) art criticism, and everywhere.[19] What we miss in the English men of letters whom Mr. Pierce exposes is the completely awakened intelligence, the consciousness of their own time, which we find in Goethe; of which we find traces in Byron only.

As for Mr. Pierce's book, it is a valuable and scholarly work which deserves praise.

T. S. E

NOTES

1. Frederick E. Pierce (1878-1935), assistant professor of English at Yale University.

2. Pierce writes that the popular success of German playwright August von Kotzebue (1761-1819), author of *Menschenhass und Reue* [translated as *The Stranger*] (1789) and *Das Kind der Liebe* [translated as *Lovers' Vows*] (1791), "reached all over western Europe" in the early 1800s (38). The epic poems of Robert Southey (1774-1843), including *Joan of Arc* (1796) and *Madoc* (1805), were applauded by contemporaries like Charles Lamb and William Taylor, who urged him to aspire to the achievements of Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724-1803), author of the *Der Messias* [*The Messiah*] (1773). Pierce observes that Dante's rise in popularity "started as part of the general Italian wave" into England (222-23), which gained momentum with Leigh Hunt's *Stories from the Italian Poets* (1846), a collection of prose summaries of Dante and his successors in Renaissance Italy, including Ludovico Ariosto (1474-1533), Matteo Maria Boiardo (1441-94), Luigi Pulci (1432-84), and others.

3. TSE refers to three cases of literary controversy and alleged fraud: Ossian was the narrator and alleged Gaelic author of several "ancient" epic poems that Scottish poet James Macpherson claimed to have discovered and translated in *Fingal* (1761) and *Temora* (1763). The "Rowley" poems were published as *Poems, Supposed to Have Been Written at Bristol, by Thomas Rowley,*

and Others, in the Fifteenth Century (1777) and were composed by Thomas Chatterton, who alleged that they were written by a fifteenth-century priest. And Horace Walpole admitted to his authorship of the popular, proto-Gothic novel *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) in its later editions, though it was first published as a sixteenth-century romance translated by William Marshal from the original Italian of Onuphrio Muralto, Canon of the Church of St. Nicholas at Otranto.

4. Charlotte Turner Smith (1749-1806) wrote *Elegiac Sonnets and Other Essays* (1784), which went through nine editions by 1800 and was translated into French and Italian. Coleridge recalls, in the first chapter of the *Biographia Literaria*, his youthful admiration for the poems collected in *Fourteen Sonnets, Elegiac and Descriptive* (1789) by the Reverend William Lisle Bowles (1762-1850). William Cowper (1731-1800) wrote *The Task* (1785), a long autobiographical poem that Pierce calls "widely popular" (21). *Louisa: A Poetical Novel, in Four Epistles* (1784) by poet Anna Seward (1742-1809), known as the "swan of Lichfield," went through four editions in its first year alone.

5. TSE reiterates Pierce's discussion of the "thin but unbroken line of succession" that connects the Gothic romances of Ann Radcliffe (1764-1823), especially *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), to the journals of Samuel Rogers (1763-1855) and the poems of Thomas Moore, and finally to the gothic narratives of Byron's *Lara* (1814) and *Manfred* (1817).

6†. In *Ath*: "Grey"

7. Pierce discusses each of these passages from Samuel Rogers's long poem *The Pleasures of Memory* (1792), a popular pastoral meditation that he labels "a piece of charming mediocrity" (29). TSE compares Rogers's poem to Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" (1751), Byron's "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" (1812-18), and the ruminations on nature and rural life in *The Deserted Village* (1770) by Oliver Goldsmith (1728-74).

8. Sir Walter Scott's interest in the folk traditions of the Scottish border region led him to enlist the help of poets and antiquarians such as Richard Heber, John Leyden, William Laidlaw, and George Ellis to publish the two-volume collection of ballads, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802).

9. The political and literary luminaries of the Holland House group gathered around influential Whig statesman Charles James Fox (1749-1806) and his nephew, Henry Richard Fox, third Baron Holland (1773–1840), at the latter's Kensington mansion, which became home to "the best literary society of the time," Pierce writes (133). Samuel Rogers was a driving force behind its meetings and also hosted the group at his own home, which he had decorated to suit his neo-classical tastes: "a frieze copied from the Parthenon ran around the staircase; rare paintings . . . and copies of antique sculpture adorned the walls" (132).

10. Pierce writes that the group, including Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, and Joseph Cottle (1770-1853), who was the publisher of *Lyrical Ballads* (1798), were particularly attuned to foreign influences, especially the work of Rousseau (the motivating force behind the "Pantisocracy"), and that Coleridge benefited from the influence of Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller (1759-1805), Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803), Gottfried August Bürger (1747-94), and others.

11. William Taylor (1765-1836) translated works by Lessing, Goethe, Bürger, and other contemporary German authors; a portrait and brief mention of Taylor appears in George Borrow's *Lavengro: The Scholar, the Gypsy, the Priest* (1851), which TSE taught in his 1916 Extension course (1.480).

12. Called the "Suburban School" because its members lived mainly in Hampstead and other areas outside of London, the group that gravitated around James Henry Leigh Hunt (1784-1859) included painters Benjamin Robert Haydon (1786-1846) and Joseph Severn (1793-1879). Haydon sparked the group's interest in the Elgin Marbles, the collection of ancient Greek statuary purchased by the British government in 1816. Pierce quotes from Charles Cowden Clarke's account in *Recollections of Writers* (1878) of their attendance at "the glorious feasts of sacred music at the Portuguese Chapel in South Street, Grosvenor Square" where they heard "the masses of Mozart and Haydn for the first time in England, and where the noble old Gregorian hymn tunes and responses were chanted to perfection" (169).

13. Keats's narrative poems *Isabella; or, The Pot of Basil* and *The Eve of St. Agnes* were both published in 1820.

14. Shelley's *The Cenci* (1819). Coleridge spent much of his intellectual energy on philosophy rather than poetry after moving into the Highgate Hill home of physician James Gillman for treatment of his opium addiction.

15. From the end of Blake's "To the Muses," in *Poetical Sketches* (1783); *read*: "move! / The sound is forc'd, the notes are few!"

16. Conversations with Eckermann: *Gespräche mit Goethe* (1836, 1848) [in English, *Conversations with Goethe*, or *Conversations with Eckermann*].

17. German composer and music critic, Robert Schumann (1810-56).

18. *Trans*: in the dark leaves the gold oranges glow. The Romantic *Drang nach Italien*, or "impulse towards Italy," TSE suggests, is epitomized in this line from the lyric that prefaces Book III of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* [*Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*] (1795-96) and begins, "Kennst du das Land, wo die Zitronen blühn?" [Do you know the land where the lemon-trees bloom?]. Schumann set this lyric in Op. 79 and Op. 98; he imagined the funeral of its speaker, Mignon, in *Requiem für Mignon aus Goethes Wilhelm Meister* (Op. 98b).

19. TSE refers to Goethe's novel *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* [*The Sorrows of Young Werther*] (1774), his play *Iphigenie auf Tauris: Ein Schauspiel* [*Iphigenia in Tauris*] (1787), and the two-part play *Faust: Eine Tragödie* [*Faust*] (1808, 1832). Goethe wrote about natural history in *Die Schriften zur Naturwissenschaft* [*Periodical Issues on the Natural Sciences*] (1823) and elsewhere; about color in his *Zur Farbenlehre* [*Theory of Colours*] (1810); on art and art criticism in his journal *Über Kunst und Altertum* [*On Art and Antiquity*] (1816-1828). TSE read excerpts from most of these in his 1907 translation of Goethe's *Maximen und Reflexionen* [*Maxims and Reflections*] (1833).

"Rhetoric" and Poetic Drama[1]

The death of Rostand was the disappearance of the poet whom,[2†] more than any other in France, we treated as the exponent of "rhetoric," thinking of rhetoric as something recently out of fashion.[3] And as we find ourselves looking back rather tenderly upon the author of *Cyrano* we wonder what this vice or quality is that is associated as plainly with Rostand's merits as with his defects. His rhetoric, at least, suited him at times so well, and so much better than it suited a much greater poet, Baudelaire, who is at times as rhetorical as Rostand. And we begin to suspect that the word is merely a vague term of abuse for any style that is bad, that is so evidently bad or second rate[4†] that we do not recognize the necessity for greater precision in the phrases we apply to it.

Our own Elizabethan and Jacobean poetry – in so nice a problem it is much safer to stick to one's own language – is repeatedly called "rhetorical." It had this and that notable quality, but, when we wish to admit that it had defects, it is rhetorical. It had serious defects, even gross faults, but we cannot be considered to have erased them from our language when we are so unclear in our perception of what they are. The fact is that both Elizabethan prose and Elizabethan poetry are written in a variety of styles with a variety of vices. Is the style of Lyly, is Euphuism, rhetorical? In contrast to the elder style of Ascham and Elyot which it assaults, it is a clear, flowing, orderly and relatively pure style, with a systematic if monotonous formula of antitheses and similes.[5] Is the style of Nashe? A tumid, flatulent, vigorous style very different from Lyly's. Or it is perhaps the strained and the mixed figures of speech in which Shakespeare indulged himself. Or it is perhaps the careful declamation of Jonson. The word simply cannot be used as synonymous with bad writing. The meanings which it has been obliged to shoulder have been mostly opprobrious; but if a precise meaning can be found for it this meaning may occasionally represent a virtue. It is one of those words which it is the business of criticism to dissect and reassemble. Let us avoid the assumption that rhetoric is a vice of manner, and endeavour to find a rhetoric of substance also, which is right because it issues from what it has to express.

At the present time there is a manifest preference for the "conversational" in poetry – the style of "direct speech," opposed to the "oratorical"

and the rhetorical; but if rhetoric is any convention of writing inappropriately applied, this conversational style can and does become a rhetoric – or what is supposed to be a conversational style, for it is often as remote from polite discourse as well could be. Much of the second and third rate in American *vers libre* is of this sort; and much of the second and third rate in English Wordsworthianism. There is in fact no conversational or other form which can be applied indiscriminately; if a writer wishes to give the effect of speech he must positively give the effect of himself talking in his own person or in one of his rôles; and if we are to express ourselves, our variety of thoughts and feelings, on a variety of subjects with inevitable rightness, we must adapt our manner to the moment with infinite variations. Examination of the development of Elizabethan drama shows this progress in adaptation, a development from monotony to variety, a progressive refinement in the perception of the variations of feeling, and a progressive elaboration of the means of expressing these variations. This drama is admitted to have grown away from the rhetorical expression, the bombast speeches, of Kyd and Marlowe to the subtle and dispersed utterance of Shakespeare and Webster. But this apparent abandonment or outgrowth of rhetoric is two things: it is partly an improvement in language and it is partly progressive variation in feeling. There is, of course, a long distance separating the furibund fluency of old Hieronimo and the broken words of Lear. There is also a difference between the famous

> Oh eyes no eyes, but fountains full of tears!
> Oh life no life, but lively form of death![6]

and the superb "additions to Hieronimo."[7]*

We think of Shakespeare perhaps as the dramatist who concentrates everything into a sentence, "Pray you undo this button," or "Honest honest Iago";[8] we forget that there is a rhetoric proper to Shakespeare at his best period which is quite free from the genuine Shakespearean vices either of the early period or the late. These passages are comparable to the best bombast of Kyd or Marlowe, with a greater command of language and a greater control of the emotion. *The Spanish Tragedy* is bombastic when it descends to language which was only the trick of its age; *Tamburlaine* is bombastic because it is monotonous, inflexible to the alterations of emotion. The really fine rhetoric of Shakespeare occurs in situations where a character in the play *sees himself* in a dramatic light:[9]†

Othello: And say, besides, – that in Aleppo once . . .[10]

Coriolanus: If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there,
That like an eagle in a dovecote, I
Fluttered your Volscians in Corioli.
Alone I did it. Boy! . . .[11]

Timon: Come not to me again; but say to Athens,
Timon hath made his everlasting mansion
Upon the beachèd verge of the salt flood . . .[12]

It occurs also once in *Antony and Cleopatra*, when Enobarbus is inspired to see Cleopatra in this dramatic light:[13†]

The barge she sat in . . .[14]

Shakespeare made fun of Marston, and Jonson made fun of Kyd.[15] But in Marston's play the words were expressive of nothing; and Jonson was criticizing the feeble and conceited language, not the emotion, not the "oratory." Jonson is as oratorical himself, and the moments when his oratory succeeds are, I believe, the moments that conform to our formula.[16†] Notably the speech of Sylla's ghost in the induction to *Catiline*, and the speech of Envy at the beginning of *The Poetaster*. These two figures are contemplating their own dramatic importance, and quite properly. But in the Senate speeches in *Catiline*, how tedious, how dusty![17] Here we are spectators not of a play of characters, but of a play of forensic, exactly as if we had been forced to attend the sitting itself. A speech in a play should never appear to be intended to move us as it might conceivably move other characters in the play, for it is essential that we should preserve our position of spectators, and observe always from the outside though with complete understanding. The scene in *Julius Caesar* is right because the object of our attention is not the speech of Antony (*Bedeutung*) but the effect of his speech upon the mob, and Antony's intention, his preparation and consciousness of the effect.[18] And, in the rhetorical speeches from Shakespeare which have been cited, we have this necessary advantage of a new clue to the character, in noting the angle from which he views himself. But when a character *in* a play makes a direct appeal to us, we are either the victims of our own sentiment, or we are in the presence of a vicious rhetoric.

These references ought to supply some evidence of the propriety of Cyrano on Noses.[19] Is not Cyrano exactly in this position of contemplating

himself as a romantic, a dramatic figure? This dramatic sense on the part of the characters themselves is rare in modern drama. In sentimental drama it appears in a degraded form, when we are evidently intended to accept the character's sentimental interpretation of himself. In plays of realism we often find parts which are never allowed to be consciously dramatic, for fear, perhaps, of their appearing less real. But in actual life, in many of those situations in actual life which we enjoy consciously and keenly, we are at times aware of ourselves in this way, and these moments are of very great usefulness to dramatic verse. A very small part of acting is that which takes place on the stage! Rostand had – whether he had anything else or not – this dramatic sense, and it is what gives life to Cyrano. It is a sense which is almost a sense of humour (for when anyone is conscious of himself as acting, something like a sense of humour is present). It gives Rostand's characters – Cyrano at least – a gusto which is uncommon on the modern stage. No doubt Rostand's people play up to this too steadily. We recognize that in the love scenes of Cyrano in the garden, for in *Romeo and Juliet* the profounder dramatist shows his lovers melting into unconsciousness of their isolated selves, shows the human soul in the process of forgetting itself. Rostand could not do that; but in the particular case of Cyrano on Noses, the character, the situation, the occasion were perfectly suited and combined. The tirade generated by this combination is not only genuinely and highly dramatic: it is possibly poetry also. If a writer is incapable of composing such a scene as this, so much the worse for his poetic drama.[20†]

Cyrano satisfies, as far as scenes like this can satisfy, the requirements of poetic drama. It must take genuine and substantial human emotions, such emotions as observation can confirm, typical emotions, and give them artistic form; the degree of abstraction is a question for the method of each author. In Shakespeare the form is determined in the unity of the whole, as well as single scenes; it is something to attain this unity, as Rostand does, in scenes if not the whole play. Not only as a dramatist, but as a poet, he is superior to Maeterlinck, whose drama, in failing to be dramatic, fails also to be poetic. Maeterlinck has a literary perception of the dramatic and a literary perception of the poetic, and he joins the two; the two are not, as sometimes they are in the work of Rostand, fused. His characters take no conscious delight in their rôle – they are sentimental. With Rostand the centre of gravity is in the expression of the emotion, not as with Maeterlinck in the emotion which cannot be expressed. Some writers appear to believe

that emotions gain in intensity through being inarticulate. Perhaps the emotions are not significant enough to endure full daylight.[21†]

In any case, we may take our choice: we may apply the term "rhetoric" to the type of dramatic speech which I have instanced, and then we must admit that it covers good as well as bad. Or we may choose to except this type of speech from rhetoric. In that case we must say that rhetoric is any adornment or inflation of speech which is *not done for a particular effect* but for a general impressiveness. And in this case, too, we cannot allow the term to cover all bad writing.

NOTES

1. As printed in *SE*; originally "Whether Rostand Had Something about Him," a review of *Le Vol de la Marseillaise*, by Edmond Rostand (Paris: Charpentier et Fasquelle, 1919). Pp. 359. *The Athenaeum*, 4656 (25 July 1919), 665-66; revised under the present title in *SW*.

2†. In *SW*: "The death of Rostand is the"

3. French dramatist and poet Edmond Rostand (1868-1918), best known for *Cyrano de Bergerac* (1898), died on 2 Dec 1918.

4†. In *SW*: "second-rate"

5. TSE's list of Renaissance writers of English prose includes John Lyly (ca. 1554-1606) – whose style in the two-part didactic romance, *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wyt* (1578) and *Euphues and his England* (1580), gave rise to the epithet "Euphuism," meaning ornate or mannered – and his predecessors, Roger Ascham (ca. 1515-68), author of *The Scholemaster* (1570), and Sir Thomas Elyot (ca. 1490-1546), author of *The Boke Named the Governour* (1531). TSE devoted a unit of his 1918 Extension course to "Euphuism" (1.755).

6. *Read*: "O eyes! no eyes, but fountains fraught with tears! / O life! no life, but"; Hieronimo's lament in *The Spanish Tragedy* (III.ii.1-2), famous in part because of the derision that it earned from Ben Jonson in *Every Man in his Humour* (I.iv).

7*. TSE's note: "Of the authorship it can only be said that the lines are by some admirer of Marlowe. This might well be Jonson." The 1602 version of *The Spanish Tragedy* (originally ca. 1592) incorporated more than 300 new lines in a style drastically different from the rest. The authorship of the lines is now contested, but the editor of the volume that TSE used in his 1918 Extension lectures attributes the additions to Jonson – *The Minor Elizabethan Drama Vol I. Pre-Shakespearean Tragedies* (London: Dent, 1910), xi. Charles Lamb refers to them as the "additions" in *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets* (London: Bumpus, 1813): "A late discovery at Dulwich College has ascertained that two sundry payments were made to Ben Jonson by the Theatre for furnishing additions to Hieronimo" (12).

8. *King Lear* V.iii.310; *Othello* V.ii.154.

9†. See textual note 1 for the *Ath* version of the first four paragraphs.

10. *Othello* V.ii.352; in *Ath*: "And likewise say that at Aleppo once. . . ."

11. *Coriolanus* V.vi.113; the final line added in *SW*, without ellipses.

12. *Timon of Athens* V.ii.217-19; in *Ath*: "has built" and "Beyond the beachèd."

13†. In *Ath*: "and in *Antony and Cleopatra*, when the old captain is inspired to see Cleopatra in this dramatic light:"

14. TSE adapted this description of the Queen sailing on the river Cydnus – "The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne, / Burn'd on the water" (II.ii.192) – in "Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar": "Her shuttered barge / Burned on the water all the day" (*CPP* 24). He returned to it in *TWL* at the beginning of "A Game of Chess": "The Chair she sat in, like a burnished throne, / Glowed on the marble" (*CPP* 39).

15. Though he played the lead role in *The Spanish Tragedy* by Thomas Kyd (ca. 1558-94) at the beginning of his career, Ben Jonson later mocked the play in *Every Man in his Humour* and continued his ridicule in *The Alchemist* and *Bartholomew Fair*. Poet and playwright John Marston (1576-1634) was author of *The Scourge of Villanie. Three Books of Satyres* (1598).

16†. In *Ath*: "Jonson is as oratorical himself: 'Dost thou not feel me, Rome, not yet? lies night / So heavy on thee, and my shade so light?'" In *SW*, TSE deleted the quotation but added the entirety of the subsequent paragraph, beginning "and the moments when his oratory succeeds"; in the deleted passage, TSE misquotes the lines spoken by the ghost of Sylla in Jonson's *Catiline*: "Dost thou not feele me, Rome? Not yet? Is night / So heavy on thee, and my weight so light?" He returned to the same lines and to Envy's introductory remarks in *The Poetaster* – "Light, I salute thee, but with wounded nerves" – in his essay on Ben Jonson (152-53).

17. Jonson's Cicero accuses Catiline of conspiracy before the Senate in IV.ii.

18. TSE's parenthetical insertion distinguishes between the "meaning" (*Bedeutung*) of Marc Antony's speech (III.ii) and its rhetorical effect, which is to sway public opinion against Caesar's assassins; he may draw upon the distinction that Alexius Meinong makes in *Über Annahmen* [*On Assumptions*] (1902) between *Bedeutung* and *Ausdruck* ("expression"), a difference to which TSE had referred in his dissertation (1.314). He may also refer to Gottlob Frege's distinction between *Bedeutung* and *Sinn* (sense), which he mentions in a 1914 graduate essay (1.184).

19. In Act I, Cyrano holds forth at length on the virtue of extraordinarily large noses like his own, offering his accuser – who has unimaginatively called Cyrano's nose "large" – a dramatic list of more original insults.

20†. See textual note 2 for the *Ath* version of this paragraph.

21†. See textual note 3 for the *Ath* version of this paragraph.

TEXTUAL NOTES

1. In *SW*, TSE heavily revised the first four paragraphs, leading to the quotation from *Othello*; in *Ath*, the essay began:

> M. Rostand had, as there was never much doubt, some force, or at least some power, whether of the theatre, or of the drama, or of poetry, the most analytical had not troubled to decide by analysis. The question whether M. Rostand produced any permanent work of art cannot even now be seriously entertained; the conviction grows that what was important was not any literary perfection, but M. Rostand himself. When *L'Oiseau bleu* appeared, it was nearly enough contemporary with *Chantecler* to recall the latter to mind.[*] The recollection brought a feeling of reassurance, of security; it was enough for Rostand to be present; and later, among unfamiliar and not reassuring figures, Claudel or Suarès, it became terrifying that he should be absent.

To review the present book of war verse, the last writings of Rostand, would be ungenerous to its author.[*] The quality which saved his drama is visible here working in a matter which would be likely to render it ridiculous. It is too late to subscribe our sympathy to the emotions expressed; it is too soon to regard the book tenderly as a keepsake. If we respect the memory of Rostand, and would feel kindly toward this book, we must extract the essence of its merit from the work of earlier years.

We have heard said of Rostand, "rhetorician."[*] The word is used – it is used a good deal in our time – often by people who have not stopped to consider whether "rhetoric" is an epithet of praise or reproach, whether it is or is not synonymous with bad writing, or whether it bears any index of valuation at all. The word means a good many things in writing, and in our time mostly opprobrious; but among the many meanings that it comprehends it is possible that there may be one which is a positive virtue, and that this meaning may be applied to the rhetoric of Rostand. For the word is one of those words which it is part of the business of criticism to dissolve, finding a variety of particular meanings, each of which is in the end a cluster of particular facts. Instead of seeking, therefore, a definition (definition is a labor of creation rather than of criticism), we might do better to find a "rhetorical" period of a rhetoric similar to Rostand's, within that period to find writers who are rhetorical, and to inquire whether there is not some positive virtue in their rhetoric which may have a counterpart in the work of Rostand. Let us avoid the assumption that rhetoric is in the manner only, that it is merely bad writing, and endeavor to find a rhetoric of the stuff itself. We may distinguish also between rhetoric as the formed style of a period, and as the individual habit of a writer.

The important rhetoric, for my purpose, is the rhetoric of content, not the rhetoric of language. The distinction becomes evident and evidently capital when we examine work of contemporary poets. At the present time, there is a visible preference for the "conversational," the style of "direct speech," as opposed to the "oratorical"; but this conversational style may and does become itself a rhetoric, in becoming a fixed convention applied to any matter, not invariably issuing out of the matter treated but imposed upon it. Certain writers have indeed succeeded in obtaining, at times, the effect of direct or simple speech desired; but the avoidance of the rhetorical expression of older writers has become a form, or has separated into a variety of forms or rhetorics which impede, as often as they assist, the expression of feeling. What is overlooked is the fact that there is no "conversational" or other form which can be applied indiscriminately; and that if we are to express ourselves, our variety of thoughts and feelings, on a variety of subjects with inevitable rightness, we must adapt our manner to the moment with infinite variations. Examination of the development of Elizabethan drama shows this progress in adaptation, a development from monotony to variety, a progressive refinement in the perception of the variations of feeling and a progressive elaboration of the means for expressing these variations. This drama is supposed to have grown away from rhetorical expression, from the bombast speeches of Kyd and Marlowe to the subtle and dispersed utterance of the mature Shakespeare and Webster. But this apparent abandonment or outgrowth of rhetoric is two things: it is partly an improvement in language and it is partly progressive variation in feeling. There is, of course, a long distance between the furibund fluency of old Hieronimo and the broken words of Lear. We think of Shakespeare, perhaps, as the dramatist of sentences, of "Prithee undo this button" or "Honest honest Iago";

we forget that at the proper moments Shakespeare is as rhetorical, but with a greater command of language and a greater control of the emotion, as Kyd or Marlowe. *The Spanish Tragedy* is bombastic because the language is inferior; *Tamburlaine* is bombastic because it is monotonous, inflexible to the alterations of emotion. Shakespeare when he chooses, when the situation requires it, is as "rhetorical" as either Kyd or Marlowe. The moments occur when a character in the play *sees himself* in a dramatic light:

* "latter to mind": During the year he spent in Paris, TSE could have seen productions of both Maeterlinck's *L'Oiseau bleu*, which premiered in Moscow in 1908 but opened in Paris in Mar 1911, and Rostand's *Chantecler*, which opened in Paris in Feb 1910. Both plays feature speaking animals in leading roles and dream-like, allegorical adventures.

* "to its author": The posthumously published *Le Vol de la Marseillaise* contains a number of patriotic poems composed during the early years of WWI, when Rostand spent his last years volunteering at military hospitals in southwestern France.

* " 'rhetorician' ": For instance, a *Times* reviewer (20 Nov) of the 1918 production of Rostand's *L'Aiglon* (1900) argued that "there is poetry in it here and there, the fresh and ingenuous expression of sincere feeling, but this is almost lost amid the floods of sheer rhetoric, the torrents of verbiage" (9).

2. In *SW*, TSE heavily revised the paragraph (which is antepenultimate in the essay's present form) beginning here as it did in *Ath* and *SW* with "These references ought":

These references ought to supply some evidence of the propriety of Cyrano on Noses. What is very rare in modern drama, either verse or prose, is the dramatic sense on the part of the characters in the play themselves. We are given plays of realism in which the parts are never allowed to be consciously dramatic, for fear, perhaps, of their appearing less real. But in actual life, or in those situations in our actual life which we enjoy consciously and keenly, we are, at times, aware of ourselves in this way, and these moments are of very great usefulness to dramatic verse. The employment of this dramatic self-consciousness on the part of the figures in the play is an important cause of the success, and of the merit, of Rostand as a dramatist. It gives his characters a vitality, a gusto in living, which is very uncommon on the modern stage. No doubt they play up to this public rôle too steadily; they often fail of any other existence than this in which they are aware of their own rôle. One is conscious of that in the love scenes of Cyrano in the garden, while in *Romeo and Juliet* the profounder or intenser poet shows his lovers melting into incoherent unconsciousness of their isolated selves, shows the human soul in the process of forgetting itself. Rostand could not do that; but the thing he could do he could do very well, and in the peculiar case of Cyrano on Noses, the character, the situation, the occasion, were perfectly suited and combined. The tirade generated by this combination is not only genuinely and highly dramatic; it is possibly poetry also. If a writer is incapable of composing such a scene as this, he is probably incapable of composing a poetic drama.

3. In *Ath*, the penultimate paragraph (in the essay's present form) read as follows and concluded the essay:

Cyrano satisfies, at least as far as scenes like this can satisfy, the requirements for poetic drama. Poetic drama must take genuine and substantial human emotions, such emotions as

observation can verify, typical emotions, and give them aesthetic form; the degree of abstraction reached is a question for the method of each writer separately. In Shakespeare, the aesthetic form is determined in the unity of the whole, as well as in isolated scenes; it is something to attain this unity, as Rostand does, in scenes if not in the whole play. Not only as a dramatist, but as a writer of poetic drama, he is superior to Maeterlinck, whose drama, in failing to be dramatic, fails also to be poetic. Maeterlinck has a literary perception of the dramatic, and a literary perception of the poetic, and he joins the two components; but they are not, as sometimes in the work of Rostand, fused. His characters take no conscious delight in their dramatic-poetic rôle – they are sentimental; while Rostand's characters, enjoying awareness, are thereby preserved from sentimentality. The centre of gravity is in the expression of the emotion, not, as with Maeterlinck, in the emotion which cannot be expressed. Rostand is not afraid to be "rhetorical," because he believes that emotion can be expressed; unlike many modern writers, who sometimes disingenuously hide their emotions behind obscure simplicities, because they believe that they will gain in intensity by suppression. Perhaps the emotions are not significant enough to endure full daylight. Whatever the value of anything Rostand had to expose, at least he did not shrink from exposure.

Was There a Scottish Literature?

A review of *Scottish Literature: Character and Influence* by G. Gregory Smith

London: Macmillan, 1919. Pp. viii + 296.

The Athenaeum, 4657 (1 Aug 1919) 680-81

We suppose that there is an English literature, and Professor Gregory Smith supposes that there is a Scotch literature.[1] When we assume that a literature exists we assume a great deal: we suppose that there is one of the five or six (at most) great organic formations of history. We do not suppose merely "a history," for there might be a history of Tamil literature;[2] but a part of History, which for us is the history of Europe. We suppose not merely a corpus of writings in one language, but writings and writers between whom there is a tradition; and writers who are not merely connected by tradition in time, but who are related so as to be in the light of eternity contemporaneous, from a certain point of view cells in one body, Chaucer and Hardy. We suppose a mind which is not only the English mind of one period with its prejudices of politics and fashions of taste, but which is a greater, finer, more positive, more comprehensive mind than the mind of any period. And we suppose to each writer an importance which is not only individual, but due to his place as a constituent of this mind. When we suppose that there is a literature, therefore, we suppose a good deal.

Professor Gregory Smith assumes the existence of a Scottish literature more by the title of his book than by any assertion he makes. For in his treatment, which is fairminded, honest, intelligent and scholarly, he even supplies us with suggestions towards finding reasons to deny the existence of a Scottish literature. He has written a series of essays, dealing with what appears to be one subject, and the conclusion issues very honestly from his treatment that the unity of the subject is not literary but only geographical. What he has done is, because of the reflections it provokes, perhaps more interesting than either of two things he might have done. He might have written a handbook of writers who were born or flourished north of a frontier; such a book might have a practical utility, without giving occasion to any generalizations. Or he might have made a study of the Scotch mind.

Such a study might have great interest on its own account, but at all events it is not part of Mr. Gregory Smith's intention. A book which contains no discussion of Scottish philosophy, which barely mentions the names of Hume and Reid, and only reports the personal dominance of Dugald Stewart in Edinburgh, does not pretend to be a study of the Scotch mind.[3] It is only the Scotch mind in literature and belles-lettres that is charted. Because the book is neither a handbook nor a study of the Scotch mind, it is a study of Scotch literature in a sense which requires that there should be an organic formation.

What clearly comes out under Mr. Gregory Smith's handling is the fact that Scottish literature falls into several periods, and that these periods are related not so much to each other as to corresponding periods in English literature. The way in which Scottish literature has been indebted to English literature is different from the way in which English literature has been indebted to other literatures. English literature has not only, at times, been much affected by the Continent, but has sometimes, for the moment, even appeared to be thrown off its balance by foreign influence. But in the long run we can see that the continuity of the language has been the strongest thing; so that however much we need French or Italian literature to explain English literature of any period, we need, to explain it, the English inheritance still more. Scottish literature lacks, in the first place, the continuity of the language. It is precisely in the years when English literature was acquiring the power of a world literature that the Scottish language was beginning to decay or to be abandoned. Gawain Douglas, in Tudor times, is perhaps the last great Scotch poet to write Scots with the same feeling toward the language, the same conviction, as an Englishman writing English.[4] A hundred years later, a Scot unquestionably Scottish, one of the greatest prose writers of his time, Sir Thomas Urquhart, translated Rabelais into a language which is English.[5]

Mr. Gregory Smith makes it copiously clear that Scots literature was the literature of the Lowlands, and that the Scot of the Lowlands was at all times much more closely in touch with his Southron enemy than with the Gaelic occasional ally.[6] Whatever aesthetic agitation may have taken place in the Highland brain, the disturbance was not communicated to the Lowlander. We are quite at liberty to treat the Scots language as a dialect, as one of the several English dialects which gradually and inevitably amalgamated into one language. Only Scotland, more isolated, and differing from the others more than they differed from each other, retained its local

peculiarities much longer. The first part of the history of Scottish literature is a part of the history of English literature when English was several dialects; the second part is a part of the history of English literature when English was two dialects – English and Scots; the third part is something quite different – it is the history of a provincial literature. And finally, there is no longer any tenable important distinction to be drawn for the present day between the two literatures.

Even if we inspect the earlier Scottish literature alone – if we take it at the period following Chaucer when nearly all the poetry of any permanent value was being produced in Scotland and not in England – we can see that Scots literature was assimilating English influence with a very different tendency from that which is evident in the English (or English including Scottish) assimilation of foreign literature. English, the more it borrowed and imitated, the more significantly it became English; the inclination of Scots literature toward English is the curve of its development toward English. And as we examine the periods of Scottish (not Scots) literature we see that there is no common denominator between the periods when Scottish literature was most important. It was important as a dialect among the other English dialects; it was important in the fifteenth century when English poetry was not important; and it was important, or rather Edinburgh literature was important, as a *provincial* literature about 1800. The last is not the importance of a separate literature; it is the importance of a provincial capital which at a certain time happens to contain as many or more men of importance than the metropolis. Edinburgh in 1800, of which Mr. Gregory Smith gives a pleasing glimpse, is analogous to Boston in America fifty years later. It was as interesting, perhaps for a moment more interesting, than London. But a provincial capital, even with the *Edinburgh* and *Blackwood's* of a hundred years ago, is the matter of a moment;[7] it depends on the continuous supply of important men; the instant this supply falls off, the metropolis, even if suffering from a like poverty, gains the ascendant. And then the important men turn to the metropolis.

It is true that Mr. Gregory Smith seeks for permanent characteristics of the Scottish mind which find expression in literature. But, with deference to his superior knowledge of his subject, the characteristics which he presents do not seem essential to literature, sufficient to mark any significant *literary* difference. Neither the love of precise detail nor the love of the fantastic, which he finds in Scottish literature, is a literary trait; on the contrary, they are both more likely to be hostile to artistic perfection. Nor has

the passion for antiquities, nor the persistence of local metres in verse, any extensive significance. To the extent to which writing becomes literature, these peculiarities are likely to be submerged.

We may even conclude it to be an evidence of strength, rather than of weakness, that the Scots language and the Scottish literature did not maintain a separate existence. It is not always recognized how fierce and fatal is the struggle for existence between literatures. In this struggle there is great advantage to be won if forces not too disparate can be united. Scottish, throwing in its luck with English, has not only much greater chance of survival, but contributes important elements of strength to complete the English: as, for instance, its philosophical and historical prose. A literature does not maintain itself simply by a continual production of great writers. The historian of literature must count with as shifting and as massive forces as the historian of politics. In the modern world the struggle of capitals of civilization is apparent on a large scale. A powerful literature, with a powerful capital, tends to attract and absorb all the drifting shreds of force about it. Up to a certain limit of dissimilarity, this fusion is of very great value. English and Scottish, probably English and Irish (if not prevented by political friction), are cognate enough for the union to be of value. The basis for one literature is one language. The danger of disintegration of English literature and language would arise if the same language were employed by peoples too remote (for geographical or other reasons) to be able to pool their differences in a common metropolis. The chances of its survival, as a language and a literature in the tradition of European civilization, would be diminished against such a concentrated force as the French. For France, of course, a different danger, real or apparent, has been announced, we believe in an intemperate and fanatical spirit, by such apostles of French culture as M. Maurras: the danger of attracting foreign forces which might be received without being digested.[8] That is at present, we trust, not an imminent peril for Britain.

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. G. Gregory Smith (1865-1932), chair of English Literature at Queens College, Belfast since 1905, was the author of *Specimens of Middle Scots* (1902), general editor of the Scottish Text Society, and editor of *The Poems of Robert Henryson* (3 vols, 1906-14). On the strength of the present volume and his ongoing editorial projects, the *Times* obituary (5 Mar 1932) later declared, "Scottish literature owes more to Gregory Smith than to any contemporary" (14).

2. TSE would have read about the ancient culture of the Tamil people – a linguistic and ethnic group in Southern India that had become a topic of recent anthropological inquiry – either in his Harvard seminar with Josiah Royce (in the work of E. B. Tylor and Sir James Frazer) or in his earlier courses there on Indic Philology.

3. The Scottish Enlightenment philosophers: David Hume; Thomas Reid (1710-96), a critic of Hume and professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Glasgow; and Dugald Stewart (1753-1828), moral philosopher who studied with Reid at Glasgow and shared his commonsense philosophical methods. Smith discusses Stewart's charismatic appeal to Edinburgh literary circles in chapter 7: "Stewart's personality," he writes, "brought the crowd" (197).

4. Scottish bishop Gawain (or Gavin) Douglas (ca. 1476-1522) was author of the *Eneados* (1553), a verse translation of the *Aeneid* into Scots. TSE lectured on Douglas in his 1918 Extension class, though he later admitted that "sundry allusions to authors, such as Gavin Douglas, whose work I hardly knew," were the result of Pound's influence (*TCC* 16).

5. Translations of the works of François Rabelais (ca. 1494-1553) by Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty (1611-60) appeared in three volumes as *Works of Mr. Francis Rabelais, Doctor in Physick* between 1653 and 1693; TSE read Charles Whibley's three-volume edition of Urquhart's translation (1900) of *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, Nos. 24-26 in the Tudor Translations Series.

6. Contradicting conventional theories about the strong Celtic influence on Scottish literature, Smith emphasizes the "racial antipathy" between the Germanic, Scots-speaking inhabitants of the Scottish Lowlands and the Scottish Gaelic-speaking inhabitants of the Highlands, which effectively severed the neighboring traditions and brought Scots poets closer to their English counterparts (speakers of what they referred to as "Southron").

7. In his chapter "The Northern Augustans," Smith discusses at length the rivalry between the two prestigious Scottish periodicals, *The Edinburgh Review; or, The Critical Journal* (1802-1929) and *Blackwood's Magazine* (1817-1980, initially *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*).

8. Charles Maurras, chief intellectual force behind the monarchist reactionary movement *L'Action française*, supported French nationalism against foreign economic and literary influence in his *L'Avenir de l'intelligence* (1905). TSE's copy (neuvième édition, Paris: Albert Fontemoing, 1905) is marked with occasional underlining and dated 1916. TSE included Maurras's work in his 1916 Extension course, calling it "sound" but "marked by extreme violence and intolerance" (1.473).

Christopher Marlowe[1]

Swinburne observes of Marlowe[2†] that "the father of English tragedy and the creator of English blank verse was therefore also the teacher and the guide of Shakespeare." In this sentence there are two misleading assumptions and two misleading conclusions. Kyd has as good a title to the first honour as Marlowe; Surrey has a better title to the second;[3] and Shakespeare was not taught or guided by one of his predecessors or contemporaries alone. The less questionable judgment is, that Marlowe exercised a strong influence over later drama, though not himself as great a dramatist as Kyd; that he introduced several new tones into blank verse, and commenced the dissociative process which drew it further and further away from the rhythms of rhymed verse; and that when Shakespeare borrowed from him, which was pretty often at the beginning, Shakespeare either made something inferior or something different.

The comparative study of English versification at various periods is a large tract of unwritten history. To make a study of blank verse alone would be to elicit some curious conclusions. It would show, I believe, that blank verse within Shakespeare's lifetime was more highly developed, that it became the vehicle of more varied and more intense feelings than it has ever conveyed since[4†]; and that after the erection of the Chinese Wall of Milton, blank verse has suffered not only arrest but retrogression. That the blank verse of Tennyson, for example, a consummate master of this form in certain applications, is cruder (*not* "rougher" or less perfect in technique) than that of half a dozen contemporaries of Shakespeare; cruder, because less capable of expressing complicated, subtle, and surprising emotions.

Every writer who has written any blank verse worth saving has produced particular tones which his verse and no other's is capable of rendering; and we should keep this in mind when we talk about "influences" and "indebtedness." Shakespeare is "universal" because he has more of these tones than anyone else[5†]; but they are all out of the one man; one man cannot be more than one man; there might have been six Shakespeares at once without conflicting frontiers; and to say that Shakespeare expressed nearly all human emotions, implying that he left very little for anyone else, is a radical misunderstanding of art and the artist[6†] – a misunderstanding which, even when explicitly rejected,

may lead to our neglecting the effort of attention necessary to discover the specific properties of the verse of Shakespeare's contemporaries. The development of blank verse may be likened to the analysis of that astonishing industrial product coal-tar. Marlowe's verse is one of the earlier derivatives, but it possesses properties which are not repeated in any of the analytic or synthetic blank verses discovered somewhat later.[7†]

The "vices of style" of Marlowe's and Shakespeare's age is a convenient name for a number of vices, no one of which, perhaps, was shared by all of the writers. It is pertinent, at least, to remark that Marlowe's "rhetoric" is not, or not characteristically, Shakespeare's rhetoric; that Marlowe's rhetoric consists in a pretty simple huffe-snuffe bombast,[8] while Shakespeare's is more exactly a vice of style, a tortured perverse ingenuity of images which dissipates instead of concentrating the imagination, and which may be due in part to influences by which Marlowe was untouched. Next, we find that Marlowe's vice is one which he was gradually attenuating, and even, what is more miraculous, turning into a virtue. And we find that this poet of torrential imagination[9†] recognized many of his best bits (and those of one or two others), saved them, and reproduced them more than once, almost invariably improving them in the process.

It is worth while noticing a few of these versions, because they indicate, somewhat contrary to usual opinion, that Marlowe was a deliberate and conscious workman. Mr. J. M. Robertson has spotted an interesting theft of Marlowe's from Spenser.[10†] Here is Spenser (*Faery Queen*, I. vii. 32):

Like to an almond tree y-mounted high
  On top of green Selinis all alone,
With blossoms brave bedeckèd daintily;
  Whose tender locks do tremble every one
At every little breath that under heaven is blown.

And here Marlowe (*Tamburlaine*, Part II. Act iv. Sc. iv):[11†]

Like to an almond tree y-mounted high
Upon the lofty and celestial mount
Of evergreen Selinus, quaintly deck'd
With blooms more white than Erycina's brows,
Whose tender blossoms tremble every one
At every little breath that thorough heaven is blown.

This is interesting, not only as showing that Marlowe's talent, like that of most poets, was partly synthetic, but also because it seems to give a clue

to some particularly "lyric" effects found in *Tamburlaine*, not in Marlowe's other plays, and not, I believe, anywhere else.[12†] For example, the praise of Zenocrate in Part II. Act II. Sc. iv:

> Now walk the angels on the walls of heaven,
> As sentinels to warn th' immortal souls
> To entertain divine Zenocrate.[13†]

This is not Spenser's movement, but the influence of Spenser must be present. There had been no great blank verse before Marlowe; but there was the powerful presence of this great master of melody immediately precedent; and the combination produced results which could not be repeated. I do not think that it can be claimed that Peele had any influence here.[14]

The passage quoted from Spenser has a further interest. It will be noted that the fourth line:

> With blooms more white than Erycina's brows,

is Marlowe's contribution. Compare this with these other lines of Marlowe:

> So looks my love, shadowing in her brows
> (*Tamburlaine*)

> Like to the shadows of Pyramides
> (*Tamburlaine*)[15]

and the final and best version:

> Shadowing more beauty in their airy brows
> Than have the white breasts of the queen of love.
> (*Doctor Faustus*)[16]

and compare the whole set with Spenser again (*Faerie Queen*):[17†]

> Upon her eyelids many graces sate
> Under the shadow of her even brows,

a passage which Mr. Robertson says Spenser himself used in three other places.[18]

This economy is frequent in Marlowe. Within *Tamburlaine* it occurs in the form of monotony, especially in the facile use of resonant names (e.g. the recurrence of "Caspia" or "Caspian" with the same tone effect), a practice in which Marlowe was followed by Milton, but which Marlowe himself outgrew. Again,

Zenocrate, lovlier than the love of Jove,
Brighter than is the silver Rhodope,[19]

is paralleled later by

Zenocrate, the lovliest maid alive,
Fairer than rocks of pearl and precious stone.[20]

One line Marlowe remodels with triumphant success:

And set black streamers in the firmament
(*Tamburlaine*)[21†]

becomes

See, see, where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!
(*Doctor Faustus*)[22]

The verse accomplishments of *Tamburlaine* are notably two: Marlowe gets into blank verse the melody of Spenser, and he gets a new driving power by reinforcing the sentence period against the line period. The rapid long sentence, running line into line, as in the famous soliloquies "Nature compounded of four elements" and "What is beauty, saith my sufferings, then?" marks the certain escape of blank verse from the rhymed couplet, and from the elegiac or rather pastoral note of Surrey, to which Tennyson returned.[23] If you contrast these two soliloquies with the verse of Marlowe's greatest contemporary, Kyd – by no means a despicable versifier – you see the importance of the innovation :

The one took sanctuary, and, being sent for out,
Was murdered in Southwark as he passed
To Greenwich, where the Lord Protector lay.
Black Will was burned in Flushing on a stage;
Greene was hanged at Osbridge in Kent . . .[24]

which is not really inferior to:

So these four abode
Within one house together; and as years
Went forward, Mary took another mate;
But Dora lived unmarried till her death.
(Tennyson, *Dora*)[25]

In *Faustus* Marlowe went further: he broke up the line, to a gain in intensity, in the last soliloquy; and he developed a new and important conversational tone in the dialogues of Faustus with the devil. *Edward II* has never lacked consideration: it is more desirable, in brief space, to remark upon two plays, one of which has been misunderstood and the other underrated. These are the *Jew of Malta* and *Dido Queen of Carthage*.[26] Of the first of these, it has always been said that the end, even the last two acts, are unworthy of the first three.[27] If one takes the *Jew of Malta* not as a tragedy, or as a "tragedy of blood," but as a farce, the concluding act becomes intelligible; and if we attend with a careful ear to the versification, we find that Marlowe develops a tone to suit this farce, and even perhaps that this tone is his most powerful and mature tone. I say farce, but with the enfeebled humour of our times the word is a misnomer; it is the farce of the old English humour, the terribly serious, even savage comic humour, the humour which spent its last breath on the decadent genius of Dickens. It has nothing in common with J. M. Barrie, Captain Bairnsfather, or *Punch*.[28] It is the humour of that very serious (but very different) play, *Volpone*.

> First, be thou void of these affections,
> Compassion, love, vain hope, and heartless fear;
> Be moved at nothing, see thou pity none . . .
> As for myself, I walk abroad o' nights,
> And kill sick people groaning under walls,
> Sometimes I go about and poison wells . . .[29†]

and the last words of Barabas complete this prodigious caricature:

> But now begins th' extremity of heat
> To pinch me with intolerable pangs,
> Die, life! fly, soul! tongue, curse thy fill, and die![30†]

It is something which Shakespeare could not do, and which he did not want to do.[31†]

Dido appears to be a hurried play, perhaps done to order with the *Aeneid* in front of him. But even here there is progress. The account of the sack of Troy is in this newer style of Marlowe's, this style which secures its emphasis by always hesitating on the edge of caricature at the right moment:

> The Grecian soldiers, tir'd with ten years war,
> Began to cry, "Let us unto our ships,
> Troy is invincible, why stay we here?" . . .

By this, the camp was come unto the walls,
And through the breach did march into the streets,
Where, meeting with the rest, "Kill, kill !" they cried. . . .

And after him, his band of Myrmidons,
With balls of wild-fire in their murdering paws . . .

At last, the soldiers pull'd her by the heels,
And swung her howling in the empty air. . . .

We saw Cassandra sprawling in the streets . . .[32]

This is not Virgil, or Shakespeare; it is pure Marlowe. By comparing the whole speech with Clarence's dream, in *Richard III*, one acquires a little insight into the difference between Marlowe and Shakespeare:

What scourge for perjury
Can this dark monarchy afford false Clarence?[33]

There, on the other hand, is what Marlowe's style could not do; the phrase has a concision which is almost classical, certainly Dantesque. Again, as often with the Elizabethan dramatists, there are lines in Marlowe, besides the many lines that Shakespeare adapted, that might have been written by either:

If thou wilt stay
Leap in mine arms; mine arms are open wide;
If not, turn from me, and I'll turn from thee;
For though thou hast the heart to say farewell,
I have not power to stay thee.[34]

But the direction in which Marlowe's verse might have moved, had he not "dyed swearing," is quite un-Shakespearian, is toward this intense and serious and indubitably great poetry, which, like some great painting and sculpture, attains its effects by something not unlike caricature.

NOTES

1†. In *A&L* and *SW*, the essay bore the following epigraph: "Marloe was stabd with a dagger, and dyed swearing." Seventeenth-century English poet Henry Oxinden recorded this and other remarks about Marlowe made by Sussex vicar Simon Aldrich in his commonplace book, and Oxinden also copied them, on 10 Feb 1640, onto the flyleaf of a rare 1629 edition of *Hero and Leander*. TSE most likely encountered the passage in an appendix to the *Works of Christopher Marlowe* (1885) edited by A. H. Bullen.

As printed in *SE*; originally "Some Notes on the Blank Verse of Christopher Marlowe," *Art & Letters*, 2 (Autumn 1919), 194-99; revised and retitled "Notes on the Blank Verse of Christopher Marlowe" in *SW*. The *A&L* version was likely finished by 26 Sept 1919 (*L1* 398). The 1932 American edition of *SE* erroneously truncated the title to "Marlowe" in the text but not on the table of contents.

2†. In *A&L* and *SW*: "A more friendly critic, Mr. A. C. Swinburne, observes of this poet"

Swinburne, *Contemporaries of Shakespeare*, ed. Edmund Gosse, C. B. and Thomas James Wise (London: Heinemann, 1919), 3; for TSE's review of this edition in the *Athenaeum*, see "Swinburne as Critic" (115). Swinburne's *A Study of Ben Jonson* (1889) and *The Age of Shakespeare* (1908)

3. Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (1517-47) was among the first poets to use English blank verse in his translations from the Psalms and the *Aeneid*.

4†. In *A&L* and *SW*: "and more intense art-emotions than it has ever conveyed since"

5†. In *A&L* and *SW*: "is 'universal' (if you like) because he"

6†. In *SW*: "the artist. A misunderstanding"

7†. In *A&L*: "synthetic blank-verses"

The earliest products to be derived from coal-tar – the liquid that results from the carbonization of coal – included chemical solvents and disinfectants; from these and other primary constituents were then derived a number of synthetic products, including textile dyes, sweeteners, and perfumes. TSE mentions "the use of the waste products of coal-tar in industry" again in his fourth Clark lecture (669). He may recall Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Adventure of the Empty House" (1903), in which Sherlock Holmes reveals that, during the time since his apparent death, he "spent some months in a research into the coal-tar derivatives . . . in a laboratory at Montpellier." In a letter to fellow Holmes aficionado John Hayward on 2 Jan 1936, TSE warned about his own forthcoming absence: "I may spend some months in Montpellier . . . in a research into the coal-tar derivatives" (King's).

8. Huffe-snuffe (or huff-snuff): arrogant, hectoring; TSE may have recalled it from Thomas Nashe's "Preface" to Robert Greene's *Menaphon* (1589), reprinted in G. Gregory Smith's *Elizabethan Critical Essays* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1904), 316.

9†. In *A&L* and *SW*: "this bard of torrential imagination"

10†. In *A&L*: "J. G. Robertson"

In *Elizabethan Literature* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1914), prolific journalist and self-taught scholar of Renaissance literature J. M. Robertson (1856-1933) claims of *The Faerie Queen* by Edmund Spenser (ca. 1552-99): "Instantly after the issue of the first three cantos, Marlowe in the printed *Tamburlaine* chants over and again the melody of the lines" (78-79). Robertson quotes the same stanza from *The Faerie Queen* that TSE includes here but does not give the corresponding lines from Marlowe, which TSE supplies.

11†. In *A&L* and *SW*, TSE correctly gave Sc. iii.

Tamburlaine II, IV.iii.119-24. TSE owned *The Plays of Christopher Marlowe* (London: Dent, 1916), which bears his signature and marginalia.

12†. In *A&L* (without commas): "not I believe anywhere else"

13†. In *A&L* and *SW*: "divine Zenocrate: etc."

Tamburlaine II, II.iv.15-17; TSE recalled these lines in a letter of 31 Dec 1935 to Bonamy Dobrée, with whom he hoped to find "a chop-house in London of sufficient dignity to entertain – divine Zenocrate" (Brotherton).

14. Robertson claims that the work of dramatist George Peele (1556-96) – whose *Old Wives' Tale* (1595) TSE had discussed in his 1918 Extension course during the lectures on Marlowe – belongs to "the Marlowe school," and he includes Peele's *The Love of King David and Fair Bethsabe* (1599) as a member of the "chorus" inspired by Spenser in *Elizabethan Literature* (79).

15. *Tamburlaine* I, V.i.513 and IV.ii.103.

16. *Doctor Faustus* I.i.122-23; *read*: "Than has the white breasts"

17†. In *A&L* and *SW*, TSE abbreviated the parenthetical citation "(F. Q.)."

18. *Faerie Queen* II.iii.25; Robertson makes the claim in *Elizabethan Literature* (78).

19. *Tamburlaine* I, I.ii.87-88; *read*: "Zenocrate, lovelier than"

20. *Tamburlaine* I, III.iii.117-18; *read*: "Zenocrate, the loveliest maid"

21†. In *A&L*: "and let black streamers"; *Tamburlaine* II, V.iii.49.

22. *Doctor Faustus* V.ii.78.

23. *Tamburlaine* I, II.vii.12-29 and V.i.135-91.

24. From *Arden of Faversham* (or *Feversham*, V.vi.504-08), an early domestic drama (1592) of contested authorship, historically significant (as TSE writes in the syllabus for his Extension course during the lecture on Thomas Kyd, whom he labels "the probable author") for its "unique attempt at tragedy based on contemporary events," the murder of Thomas Arden by his wife and her lover (1.754). TSE follows the version that he assigned in class from *The Minor Elizabethan Drama, Vol I. Pre-Shakespearean Tragedies*, London: Dent, 1910). In *Elizabethan Literature*, Robertson asserts that Kyd's authorship of the play is "now substantially certain" (100).

25. The final lines of Tennyson's narrative poem, "Dora," in *Poems* (1842).

26. *Edward the Second* (1594), *The Jew of Malta* (1633), *The Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage* (1594).

27. In addition to the textual corruptions of the 1633 version of the play, the drastic differences between the first two and the last three acts of *The Jew of Malta* have long led scholars to doubt that Marlowe was its sole author. In his 1910 edition, C. F. Tucker Brooke attests: "all critics of the play have noticed with regret the failure of the last half . . . to fulfill the splendid promise of the first two acts." *Works of Christopher Marlowe* (Oxford: Clarendon), 232.

28. Scottish playwright Sir J. M. Barrie (1860-1937) was the author of *Peter Pan; or, The Boy Who Would Not Grow Up* (1904). Bairnsfather, a cartoonist and former WWI military captain who was known during the war for his farcical sketches of the walrus-mustached, pipe-smoking soldier "Old Bill," had recently co-written with Arthur Eliot *The Better 'Ole*, a musical comedy at the Oxford Music Hall. TSE called it an embodiment of "the cheery philosophy of our brave boys in the trenches" (1.614). *Punch* was an illustrated comic periodical published weekly in Britain since 1841; its sophisticated cartoons and widespread circulation led TSE to label it "a pretty reliable barometer of the English middle-class Grin" (1.636).

29†. In *A&L* and *SW*: "under walls: / Sometimes"; *The Jew of Malta* II.iii.174-76 and 179-81.

30†. In *A&L* and *SW*: "intolerable pangs: / Die"; *The Jew of Malta* V.v.86-8.

31†. In *A&L* and *SW*: "could not do, and which he could not have understood."

32. *The Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage* II.i.126-28; 188-90; 216-17; 247-48; 274. TSE adapts the third quotation, from Aeneas's description of the Myrmidons, in "Sweeney among the Nightingales": "Rachel *née* Rabinovitch / Tears at the grapes with murderous paws" (*CPP* 35).

33. *Richard III* I.iv.50-51.

34. *The Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage* V.i.179-82.

Tradition and the Individual Talent[1]

I

In English writing we seldom speak of tradition, though we occasionally apply its name in deploring its absence. We cannot refer to "the tradition" or to "a tradition"; at most, we employ the adjective in saying that the poetry of So-and-so is "traditional" or even "too traditional." Seldom, perhaps, does the word appear except in a phrase of censure. If otherwise, it is vaguely approbative, with the implication, as to the work approved, of some pleasing archaeological reconstruction. You can hardly make the word agreeable to English ears without this comfortable reference to the reassuring science of archaeology.

Certainly the word is not likely to appear in our appreciations of living or dead writers. Every nation, every race, has not only its own creative, but its own critical turn of mind; and is even more oblivious of the shortcomings and limitations of its critical habits than of those of its creative genius. We know, or think we know, from the enormous mass of critical writing that has appeared in the French language the critical method or habit of the French; we only conclude (we are such unconscious people) that the French are "more critical" than we, and sometimes even plume ourselves a little with the fact, as if the French were the less spontaneous. Perhaps they are; but we might remind ourselves that criticism is as inevitable as breathing, and that we should be none the worse for articulating what passes in our minds when we read a book and feel an emotion about it, for criticizing our own minds in their work of criticism. One of the facts that might come to light in this process is our tendency to insist, when we praise a poet, upon those aspects of his work in which he least resembles anyone else. In these aspects or parts of his work we pretend to find what is individual, what is the peculiar essence of the man. We dwell with satisfaction upon the poet's difference from his predecessors, especially his immediate predecessors; we endeavour to find something that can be isolated in order to be enjoyed. Whereas if we approach a poet without this prejudice[2†] we shall often find that not only the best, but the most individual parts of his work may be those in which the dead poets,

his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously. And I do not mean[3†] the impressionable period of adolescence, but the period of full maturity.

Yet if the only form of tradition, of handing down, consisted in following the ways of the immediate generation before us in a blind or timid adherence to its successes, "tradition" should positively be discouraged. We have seen many such simple currents soon lost in the sand; and novelty is better than repetition. Tradition is a matter of much wider significance. It cannot be inherited, and if you want it you must obtain it by great labour. It involves, in the first place, the historical sense, which we may call nearly indispensable to anyone who would continue to be a poet beyond his twenty-fifth year; and the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence; the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order.[4] This historical sense, which is a sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal and of the timeless and of the temporal together, is what makes a writer traditional. And it is at the same time what makes a writer most acutely conscious of his place in time, of his own contemporaneity.[5†]

No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead. I mean this as a principle of aesthetic, not merely historical, criticism. The necessity that he shall conform, that he shall cohere, is not onesided; what happens when a new work of art is created is something that happens simultaneously to all the works of art which preceded it. The existing monuments form an ideal order among themselves, which is modified by the introduction of the new (the really new) work of art among them. The existing order is complete before the new work arrives; for order to persist after the supervention of novelty, the *whole* existing order must be, if ever so slightly, altered; and so the relations, proportions, values of each work of art toward the whole are readjusted; and this is conformity between the old and the new. Whoever has approved this idea of order, of the form of European, of English literature will not find it preposterous that the past should be altered by the present as much

as the present is directed by the past. And the poet who is aware of this will be aware of great difficulties and responsibilities.

In a peculiar sense he will be aware also that he must inevitably be judged by the standards of the past. I say judged, not amputated, by them;[6†] not judged to be as good as, or worse or better than, the dead; and certainly not judged by the canons of dead critics. It is a judgment, a comparison, in which two things are measured by each other. To conform merely would be for the new work not really to conform at all; it would not be new, and would therefore not be a work of art. And we do not quite say that the new is more valuable because it fits in; but its fitting in is a test of its value – a test, it is true, which can only be slowly and cautiously applied, for we are none of us infallible judges of conformity. We say: it appears to conform, and is perhaps individual, or it appears individual, and may conform; but we are hardly likely to find that it is one and not the other.

To proceed to a more intelligible exposition of the relation of the poet to the past: he can neither take the past as a lump, an indiscriminate bolus, nor can he form himself wholly on one or two private admirations, nor can he form himself wholly upon one preferred period. The first course is inadmissible, the second is an important experience of youth, and the third is a pleasant and highly desirable supplement. The poet must be very conscious of the main current, which does not at all flow invariably through the most distinguished reputations. He must be quite aware of the obvious fact that art never improves, but that the material of art is never quite the same. He must be aware that the mind of Europe – the mind of his own country – a mind which he learns in time to be much more important than his own private mind – is a mind which changes, and that this change is a development which abandons nothing *en route*, which does not superannuate either Shakespeare, or Homer, or the rock drawing of the Magdalenian draughtsmen.[7] That this development, refinement perhaps, complication certainly, is not, from the point of view of the artist, any improvement. Perhaps not even an improvement from the point of view of the psychologist or not to the extent which we imagine; perhaps only in the end based upon a complication in economics and machinery. But the difference between the present and the past is that the conscious present is an awareness of the past in a way and to an extent which the past's awareness of itself cannot show.

Someone said: "The dead writers are remote from us because we *know* so much more than they did." Precisely, and they are that which we know.

I am alive to a usual objection to what is clearly part of my programme for the *métier* of poetry.[8] The objection is that the doctrine requires a ridiculous amount of erudition (pedantry), a claim which can be rejected by appeal to the lives of poets in any pantheon. It will even be affirmed that much learning deadens or perverts poetic sensibility. While, however, we persist in believing that a poet ought to know as much as will not encroach upon his necessary receptivity and necessary laziness, it is not desirable to confine knowledge to whatever can be put into a useful shape for examinations, drawing-rooms, or the still more pretentious modes of publicity. Some can absorb knowledge, the more tardy must sweat for it. Shakespeare acquired more essential history from Plutarch than most men could from the whole British Museum.[9] What is to be insisted upon is that the poet must develop or procure the consciousness of the past and that he should continue to develop this consciousness throughout his career.

What happens is a continual surrender of himself as he is at the moment to something which is more valuable. The progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality.

There remains to define this process of depersonalization and its relation to the sense of tradition. It is in this depersonalization that art may be said to approach the condition of science.[10] I therefore invite you to consider, as a suggestive analogy, the action which takes place when a bit of finely filiated platinum is introduced into a chamber containing oxygen and sulphur dioxide.[11†]

II

Honest criticism[12†] and sensitive appreciation is directed not upon the poet but upon the poetry. If we attend to the confused cries of the newspaper critics and the susurrus of popular repetition that follows, we shall hear the names of poets in great numbers;[13†] if we seek not Blue-book knowledge but the enjoyment of poetry, and ask for a poem, we shall seldom find it.[14] I have tried to point out[15†] the importance of the relation of the poem to other poems by other authors, and suggested the conception of poetry as a living whole of all the poetry that has ever been written. The other aspect of this Impersonal theory of poetry is the relation of the poem to its author. And I hinted, by an analogy, that the mind of the mature poet differs from

that of the immature one not precisely in any valuation of "personality," not being necessarily more interesting, or having "more to say," but rather by being a more finely perfected medium in which special, or very varied, feelings are at liberty to enter into new combinations.

The analogy was that of the catalyst. When the two gases previously mentioned are mixed in the presence of a filament of platinum, they form sulphurous acid.[16] This combination takes place only if the platinum is present; nevertheless the newly formed acid contains no trace of platinum, and the platinum itself is apparently unaffected: has remained inert, neutral, and unchanged.[17†] The mind of the poet is the shred of platinum. It may partly or exclusively operate upon the experience of the man himself; but, the more perfect the artist, the more completely separate in him will be the man who suffers and the mind which creates; the more perfectly will the mind digest and transmute the passions which are its material.

The experience, you will notice, the elements which enter the presence of the transforming catalyst, are of two kinds: emotions and feelings. The effect of a work of art upon the person who enjoys it is an experience different in kind from any experience not of art. It may be formed out of one emotion, or may be a combination of several; and various feelings, inhering for the writer in particular words or phrases or images, may be added to compose the final result. Or great poetry may be made without the direct use of any emotion whatever: composed out of feelings solely. Canto XV of the *Inferno* (Brunetto Latini) is a working up of the emotion evident in the situation; but the effect, though single as that of any work of art, is obtained by considerable complexity of detail.[18] The last quatrain gives an image, a feeling attaching to an image, which "came," which did not develop simply out of what precedes, but which was probably in suspension in the poet's mind until the proper combination arrived for it to add itself to. The poet's mind is in fact a receptacle for seizing and storing up numberless feelings, phrases, images, which remain there until all the particles which can unite to form a new compound are present together.

If you compare several representative passages of the greatest poetry you see how great is the variety of types of combination, and also how completely any semi-ethical criterion of "sublimity" misses the mark. For it is not the "greatness," the intensity, of the emotions, the components, but the intensity of the artistic process, the pressure, so to speak, under which the fusion takes place, that counts. The episode of Paolo and Francesca employs a definite emotion, but the intensity of the poetry is something quite

different from whatever intensity in the supposed experience it may give the impression of.[19] It is no more intense, furthermore, than Canto XXVI, the voyage of Ulysses, which has not the direct dependence upon an emotion.[20] Great variety is possible in the process of transmutation of emotion:[21†] the murder of Agamemnon, or the agony of Othello, gives an artistic effect apparently closer to a possible original than the scenes from Dante.[22] In the *Agamemnon*, the artistic emotion approximates to the emotion of an actual spectator; in *Othello*, to the emotion of the protagonist himself. But the difference between art and the event is always absolute; the combination which is the murder of Agamemnon is probably as complex as that which is the voyage of Ulysses. In either case there has been a fusion of elements. The ode of Keats contains a number of feelings which have nothing particular to do with the nightingale, but which the nightingale, partly perhaps because of its attractive name, and partly because of its reputation, served to bring together.

The point of view which I am struggling to attack is perhaps related to the metaphysical theory of the substantial unity of the soul: for my meaning is, that the poet has, not a "personality" to express, but a particular medium, which is only a medium and not a personality, in which impressions and experiences combine in peculiar and unexpected ways. Impressions and experiences which are important for the man may take no place in the poetry, and those which become important in the poetry may play quite a negligible part in the man, the personality.

I will quote a passage which is unfamiliar enough to be regarded with fresh attention in the light – or darkness – of these observations:

> And now methinks I could e'en chide myself
> For doating on her beauty, though her death
> Shall be revenged after no common action.
> Does the silkworm expend her yellow labours
> For thee? For thee does she undo herself?
> Are lordships sold to maintain ladyships
> For the poor benefit of a bewildering minute?
> Why does yon fellow falsify highways,
> And put his life between the judge's lips,
> To refine such a thing – keeps horse and men
> To beat their valours for her? . . .[23]

In this passage (as is evident if it is taken in its context) there is a combination of positive and negative emotions: an intensely strong attraction toward beauty and an equally intense fascination by the ugliness which is contrasted with it and which destroys it. This balance of contrasted emotion is in the dramatic situation to which the speech is pertinent, but that situation alone is inadequate to it. This is, so to speak, the structural emotion, provided by the drama. But the whole effect, the dominant tone, is due to the fact that a number of floating feelings, having an affinity to this emotion by no means superficially evident, have combined with it to give us a new art emotion.

It is not in his personal emotions, the emotions provoked by particular events in his life, that the poet is in any way remarkable or interesting. His particular emotions may be simple, or crude, or flat. The emotion in his poetry will be a very complex thing, but not with the complexity of the emotions of people who have very complex or unusual emotions in life. One error, in fact, of eccentricity in poetry is to seek for new human emotions to express; and in this search for novelty in the wrong place it discovers the perverse. The business of the poet is not to find new emotions, but to use the ordinary ones and, in working them up into poetry, to express feelings which are not in actual emotions at all. And emotions which he has never experienced will serve his turn as well as those familiar to him. Consequently, we must believe that "emotion recollected in tranquillity" is an inexact formula.[24] For it is neither emotion, nor recollection, nor, without distortion of meaning, tranquillity. It is a concentration, and a new thing resulting from the concentration, of a very great number of experiences which to the practical and active person would not seem to be experiences at all; it is a concentration which does not happen consciously or of deliberation. These experiences are not "recollected," and they finally unite in an atmosphere which is "tranquil" only in that it is a passive attending upon the event. Of course this is not quite the whole story. There is a great deal, in the writing of poetry, which must be conscious and deliberate. In fact, the bad poet is usually unconscious where he ought to be conscious, and conscious where he ought to be unconscious. Both errors tend to make him "personal." Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality. But, of course, only those who have personality and emotions know what it means to want to escape from these things.

III

ὁ δὲ νοῦς ἴσως θειότερόν τι καὶ ἀπαθές ἐστιν.[25]

This essay proposes to halt at the frontier of metaphysics or mysticism, and confine itself to such practical conclusions as can be applied by the responsible person interested in poetry. To divert interest from the poet to the poetry is a laudable aim: for it would conduce to a juster estimation of actual poetry, good and bad. There are many people who appreciate the expression of sincere emotion in verse, and there is a smaller number of people who can appreciate technical excellence. But very few know when there is expression of *significant* emotion, emotion which has its life in the poem and not in the history of the poet. The emotion of art is impersonal. And the poet cannot reach this impersonality without surrendering himself wholly to the work to be done. And he is not likely to know what is to be done unless he lives in what is not merely the present, but the present moment of the past, unless he is conscious, not of what is dead, but of what is already living.

NOTES

1. As printed in *SE*; this essay originally appeared in two parts in the final two numbers of the *Egoist* and was combined in *SW*. The first installment was published in the *Egoist*, 6 (Sept 1919), 54-55; it comprised what is currently part I (though it was not labeled as such) and was composed sometime after 31 Aug, when TSE returned from France. The second appeared in the *Egoist*, 6 (Dec 1919), 72-73; it comprised parts II and III (labeled thus) and was "just finished" as of 18 Dec (*L1* 424). TSE consistently misremembered the original date of publication in the years to come, giving it as 1917 in *SE* (1932) and later suggesting that the essay was "certainly the first to appear in print" and was written "in 1917, when I had taken over the assistant-editorship of *The Egoist* . . . and before I had been asked to contribute to any other periodical" (*UPUC* 9).

2†. In *SW*, printer's error: "his prejudice"

3†. In *Egoist*: "And I do not intend the"

4. TSE began to conceptualize the "historical sense" in "A Note on Ezra Pound" (1918), which suggests that a poet's inspiration derives from "reading and from his knowledge of history. I mean history widely taken; any cultivation of the historical sense, of perception of our position relative to the past, and in particular of the poet's relation to poets of the past" (1.750). In a letter to Mary Hutchinson (11 July), he wrote of "the *historical sense*, which is not simply knowledge of history, a sense of balance which does not deaden one's personal taste, but trains one to discriminate one's own passions from objective criticism" (*L1* 378).

5†. In *Egoist* and *SW*: "of his contemporaneity"

6†. In *Egoist*: "judged by, not amputated, by them; not"

7. TSE refers to the creators of late Paleolithic drawings discovered in the caves like La Madeleine in the Dordogne region of southwestern France, whence the origin of the term

"Magdalenian" to denote prehistoric hunter-gatherer communities in northern and western Europe, ca. 16,000-10,000 BC. He spent three weeks on a tour of the Dordogne in Aug 1919, walking with Ezra Pound from Périgueux to Bourdeilles before setting off alone for the caves near Les Eyzies, about 30 miles south of Périgueux.

8. *métier*: occupation, profession.

9. Shakespeare drew heavily from Thomas North's 1579 translation of Plutarch's *Lives* in *Julius Caesar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *Coriolanus*, and to a lesser extent in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Timon of Athens*. In *Montaigne and Shakspere* (London: University Press, 1897), which TSE was currently reading for a forthcoming review of *The Problem of "Hamlet,"* J. M. Robertson writes: "in the English version of Plutarch's *Lives* . . . Shakspere found the most effectively concentrated history of ancient humanity that could possibly have reached him . . . it is plain that to the last he made no secondary study of antiquity" (157-58).

10. TSE alludes to Walter Pater's dictum in "The School of Giorgione," which appeared in the 1888 edition of *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry*: "All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music." He used a similar formulation two years before in "The Borderline of Prose," when he misquoted the line from memory and offered his retort: "'All the arts *approach* the condition of music.' Yes! but not by being less themselves" (1.541).

11†. In *Egoist*, this section ended with TSE's signature and "(To be concluded)."

12†. In *Egoist*: "The upshot of this article and of the article which preceded it is this: that honest criticism"

13†. In *Egoist*: "in great number;"

14. The term "blue book" originally referred to the official reports, bound in blue, of the British Parliament; in nineteenth-century American usage, "blue book" described the printed book containing the names of all persons holding office in the U. S. government.

15†. In *Egoist* and *SW*: "In the last article I tried to point out"

16. Though TSE's analogy is accurate regarding the process of catalysis, it is incorrect about the product, a fact that P. W. Robertson pointed out to him in a letter of 26 May 1926. TSE replied: "I have changed my mind on many points since the book appeared, but on none more definitely than on the use of scientific analogies. They convey to the hasty or ignorant reader an impression of precision which is misleading and even meretricious. My analogy suffers. . . . by the fact that it is false and reveals, as you point out, an ignorance of chemistry. . . . I accept your criticism gratefully" (*L*3 212-13). Science writer J. G. Crowther also told him about the mistake in a letter of 19 Sept 1932: "You say sulphur dioxide and oxygen are catalized into sulphurous acid. In fact, they are catalized into sulphur trioxide. Sulphurous acid is the solution of sulphur dioxide in water. Your error in illustrating the principle of catalysis is of course not misleading concerning the nature of the principle." An anonymous reviewer of *SE* in the *Criterion* (Oct 1932) made the same observation, remarking, "It is a pity that Mr. Eliot, in revising some of the earlier of these essays for this volume, did not consult a professional chemist – or even some friend with an elementary knowledge of chemistry. . . . Whether the theory of poetic creation which Mr. Eliot supports by this celebrated metaphor remains valid, is a more difficult question to decide (167).

17†. In *Egoist*: "has remained inert, passive and unchanged."

18. *Inferno* XV features Dante's teacher and fellow Florentine, Brunetto Latini (ca. 1210-94), author of *Li Livres dou trésor* and *Il Tesoretto*. TSE quoted the canto's concluding lines – in

which Dante compares the departing Latini to "he who gains, not he who loses" (*DC1* 165) – in the 1920 "Dante" (226) and later essays.

19. *Inferno* V relates Dante's meeting with the adulterous lovers, Paolo Malatesta and Francesca da Rimini, who were murdered by Francesca's husband, Giovanni Malatesta; the intensity of her narrative overwhelms Dante at the canto's conclusion: "I fainted with pity, as if I had been dying; and fell, as a dead body falls" (*DC1* 57).

20. In *Inferno* XXVI, the eighth circle of hell, Dante and Virgil encounter the shade of Ulysses, who relates how he persuaded his companions to undertake one final journey beyond the markers of the known world.

21†. In *Egoist* and *SW*: "transmution of emotion"

22. TSE had used, as the epigraph to "Sweeney among the Nightingales" (Sept 1918), Agamemnon's cry upon his murder by Clytemnestra: "ὤμοι, πέπληγμαι καιρίαν πληγὴν ἔσω" [Alas, I am struck deep with a mortal blow]; the poem concludes: "The nightingales are singing near / The convent of the Sacred Heart / And sang with in the bloody wood / When Agamemnon cried aloud" (*CPP* 36). He borrows from Othello's strange outburst – "You are welcome, sir, to Cyprus. Goats and monkeys!" (IV.i.254) – in the epigraph to "Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar," published in *Art & Letters* (Summer 1919).

23. *The Revenger's Tragedy* III.iv.68-78; printed anonymously in 1606 but attributed to Tourneur in 1656, now widely believed to be the work of Middleton. TSE quotes from the Mermaid edition, *Webster and Tourneur* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1893), which reads "bewildering" rather than "bewitching" (also *read*: "ladyships, / For") as in John Churton Collins's standard 1878 edition, *Plays and Poems of Cyril Tourneur*. In "Cyril Tourneur," TSE later remarked: "*bewildering* is much the richer word here" (*SE* 192).

24. From Wordsworth's "Preface" to the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* (1800): "I have said that Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity."

25. *Trans*: "Mind is, no doubt, something more divine and impassible." Aristotle, *De anima*, 1.4. 408b, trans. J. A. Smith, Professor of Philosophy at Oxford with whom TSE studied Aristotle's Logic.

Swinburne as Critic[1]

Three conclusions at least issue from the perusal of Swinburne's critical essays:[2†] Swinburne had mastered his material, was more inward with the Tudor-Stuart[3†] dramatists than any man of pure letters before or since; he is a more reliable guide to them than Hazlitt, Coleridge, or Lamb; and his perception of relative values is almost always correct.[4] Against these merits we may oppose two objections: the style is the prose style of Swinburne, and the content is not, in an exact sense, criticism. The faults of style are, of course, personal; the tumultuous outcry of adjectives, the headstrong rush of undisciplined sentences, are the index to the impatience and perhaps laziness of a disorderly mind. But the style has one positive merit: it allows us to know that Swinburne was writing not to establish a critical reputation, not to instruct a docile public,[5†] but as a poet his notes upon poets whom he admired. And whatever our opinion of Swinburne's verse, the notes upon poets by a poet of Swinburne's dimensions must be read with attention and respect.

In saying that Swinburne's essays have the value of notes of an important poet upon important poets, we must place a check upon our expectancy. He read everything, and he read with the single interest in finding literature. The critics of the romantic period were pioneers, and exhibit the fallibility of discoverers. The selections of Lamb are a successful effort of good taste, but anyone who has referred to them after a thorough reading of any of the poets included must have found that some of the best passages – which must literally have stared Lamb in the face – are omitted, while sometimes others of less value are included.[6] Hazlitt, who committed himself to the judgment that the *Maid's Tragedy* is one of the poorest of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays, has no connected message to deliver.[7] Coleridge's remarks – too few and scattered – have permanent truth; but on some of the greatest names he passes no remark, and of some of the best plays was perhaps ignorant or ill-informed. But compared with Swinburne, Coleridge writes much more as a poet might be expected to write about poets. Of Massinger's verse Swinburne says:

> It is more serviceable, more businesslike, more eloquently practical, and more rhetorically effusive – but never effusive beyond the bounds

> of effective rhetoric – than the style of any Shakespearean or of any Jonsonian dramatist. [175]

It is impossible to tell whether Webster would have found the style of Massinger more "serviceable" than his own for the last act of the *White Devil*, and indeed difficult to decide what "serviceable" here means; but it is quite clear what Coleridge means when he says that Massinger's style

> is much more easily constructed [than Shakespeare's], and may be more successfully adopted by writers in the present day.[8]

Coleridge is writing as a professional with his eye on the technique. I do not know from what writing of Coleridge Swinburne draws the assertion that "Massinger often deals in exaggerated passion," but in the essay from which Swinburne quotes elsewhere Coleridge merely speaks of the "unnaturally irrational passions," a phrase much more defensible.[9] Upon the whole, the two poets are in harmony upon the subject of Massinger; and although Coleridge has said more in five pages, and said it more clearly, than Swinburne in thirty-nine, the essay of Swinburne is by no means otiose: it is more stimulating than Coleridge's, and the stimulation is never misleading. With all his superlatives, his judgment, if carefully scrutinized, appears temperate and just.

With all his justness of judgment, however, Swinburne is an appreciator and not a critic. In the whole range of literature covered, Swinburne makes hardly more than two judgments which can be reversed or even questioned: one, that Lyly is insignificant as a dramatist, and the other, that Shirley was probably unaffected by Webster.[10] The *Cardinal* is not a cast of the *Duchess of Malfi*, certainly;[11†] but when Shirley wrote

> the mist is risen, and there's none
> To steer my wandering bark. (*Dies.*)[12]

he was probably affected by

> My soul, like to a ship in a black storm,
> Is driven, I know not whither.[13]

Swinburne's judgment is generally sound, his taste sensitive and discriminating. And we cannot say that his thinking is faulty or perverse – up to the point at which it is thinking. But Swinburne stops thinking

just at the moment when we are most zealous to go on. And this arrest, while it does not vitiate his work, makes it an introduction rather than a statement.

We are aware, after the *Contemporaries of Shakespeare* and the *Age of Shakespeare*[14†] and the books on Shakespeare and Jonson, that there is something unsatisfactory in the way in which Swinburne was interested in these people; we suspect that his interest was never articulately formulated in his mind or consciously directed to any purpose. He makes his way, or loses it, between two paths of definite direction. He might as a poet have concentrated his attention upon the technical problems solved or tackled by these men; he might have traced for us the development of blank verse from Sackville to the mature Shakespeare, and its degeneration from Shakespeare to Milton.[15] Or he might have studied through the literature to the mind of that century; he might, by dissection and analysis, have helped us to some insight into the feeling and thought which we seem to have left so far away. In either case, you would have had at least the excitement of following the movements of an important mind groping towards important conclusions. As it is, there are to be no conclusions, except that Elizabethan literature is very great, and that you can have pleasure and even ecstasy from it, because a sensitive poetic talent has had the experience. One is in risk of becoming fatigued by a hubbub that does not march; the drum is beaten, but the procession does not advance.

If, for example, Swinburne's interest was in poetry, why devote an essay to Brome?[16] "The opening scene of the *Sparagus Garden*," says Swinburne, "is as happily humorous and as vividly natural as that of any more famous comedy" [263]. The scene is both humorous and natural. Brome deserves to be more read than he is, and first of all to be more accessible than he is. But Swinburne ought to suggest or imply (I do not say impose) a reason for reading the *Sparagus Garden* or the *Antipodes*, more sufficient than any he has provided. No doubt such reason could be found.

When it is a matter of pronouncing judgment between two poets, Swinburne is almost unerring. He is certainly right in putting Webster above Tourneur, Tourneur above Ford, and Ford above Shirley.[17] He weighs accurately the good and evil in Fletcher: he perceives the essential theatricality, but his comparison of the *Faithful Shepherdess* with *Comus* is a judgment no word of which can be improved upon:

> The difference between this poem [*i.e.,* the *Faithful Shepherdess*] and Milton's exquisitely imitative *Comus* is the difference between a rose with a leaf or two faded or falling, but still fragrant and radiant, and the faultless but scentless reproduction of a rose in academic wax for the admiration and imitation of such craftsmen as must confine their ambition to the laurels of a college or the plaudits of a school.[18]

In the longest and most important essay in the *Contemporaries of Shakespeare*, the essay on Chapman,[19†] there are many such sentences of sound judgment forcibly expressed. The essay is the best we have on that great poet. It communicates the sense of dignity and mass which we receive from Chapman.[20†] But it also illustrates Swinburne's infirmities. Swinburne was not tormented by the restless desire to penetrate to the heart and the marrow of a poet, any more than he was tormented by the desire to render the finest shades of difference and resemblance between several poets. Chapman is a difficult author, as Swinburne says; he is far more difficult than Jonson, to whom he bears only a superficial likeness.[21] He is difficult beyond his obscurity. He is difficult partly through his possession of a quality comparatively deficient in Jonson, but which was nevertheless a quality of the age. It is strange that Swinburne should have hinted at a similarity to Jonson and not mentioned a far more striking affinity of Chapman's – that is, Donne. The man who wrote

> Guise, O my lord, how shall I cast from me
> The bands and coverts hindering me from thee?
> The garment or the cover of the mind
> The humane soul is; of the soul, the spirit
> The proper robe is; of the spirit, the blood;
> And of the blood, the body is the shroud:

and

> Nothing is made of nought, of all things made,
> Their abstract being a dream but of a shade,[22]

is unquestionably kin to Donne. The quality in question is not peculiar to Donne and Chapman.[23†] In common with the greatest – Marlowe, Webster, Tourneur and Shakespeare – they had a quality of sensuous thought,[24†] or of thinking through the senses, or of the senses thinking, of which the exact formula remains to be defined. If you look for it in Shelley or Beddoes,

both of whom in very different ways recaptured something of the Elizabethan inspiration, you will not find it, though you may find other qualities instead.[25] There is a trace of it only in Keats, and, derived from a different source, in Rossetti. You will not find it in the *Duke of Gandia*.[26] Swinburne's essay would have been all the better if he had applied himself to the solution of problems like this.[27†]

He did not apply himself to this sort of problem because this was not the sort of problem that interested him. The author of Swinburne's critical essays is also the author of Swinburne's verse: if you hold the opinion that Swinburne was a very great poet, you can hardly deny him the title of a great critic. There is the same curious mixture of qualities to produce Swinburne's own effect, resulting in the same blur, which only the vigour of the colours fixes. His great merit as a critic is really one which, like many signal virtues, can be stated so simply as to appear flat. It is that he was sufficiently interested in his subject-matter and knew quite enough about it; and this is a rare combination in English criticism. Our critics are often interested in extracting something from their subject which is not fairly in it. And it is because this elementary virtue is so rare that Swinburne must take a very respectable place as a critic. Critics are often interested – but not quite in the nominal subject, often in something a little beside the point; they are often learned – but not quite to the point either. (Swinburne knew some of the plays almost by heart.) Can this particular virtue at which we have glanced be attributed to Walter Pater? or to Professor Bradley? or to Swinburne's editor?[28]

NOTES

1. As printed in *SW*, where it was incorporated into the essay "Imperfect Critics" as the first of five subtitled parts, three of which had been previously published; the subsequent subtitled parts included, in order, "A Romantic Aristocrat" (26-32), "The Local Flavour" (176-80), "A Note on the American Critic" (286-90), and "The French Intelligence" (291-93). Originally "Swinburne and the Elizabethans," *The Athenaeum*, 4664 (19 Sept 1919), 909-10, a review of *Contemporaries of Shakespeare* by A. C. Swinburne, edited by Edmund Gosse and Thomas James Wise (London: William Heinemann, 1919), pp. 308; composed between 31 Aug, when TSE returned from France, and 14 Sept, when he told his brother he had finished it (*L1* 396).

2†. In *Ath*: "these collected essays"

3†. In *Ath*: "Tudor-Stewart"

4. All three writers contributed to the nineteenth-century resurgence of interest in Elizabethan drama: Coleridge in *Lectures and Notes upon Shakespeare and Other English Poets* (1883), which TSE recommended to his 1918 Extension course; Lamb in *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets, Who Lived about the Time of Shakespeare* (1808), which made the work of many minor dramatists

available for the first time; and William Hazlitt (1778-1830) in *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays* (1817) and *Lectures Chiefly on the Dramatic Literature of the Age of Elizabeth* (1820).

5†. In *Ath*: "a docile public, not like a grave condescending Arnold, but as a poet"

6. Lamb's first substantial work of criticism, *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets* is a compilation of excerpts from Renaissance plays, each of which is prefaced with a brief commentary and subjected to Lamb's editorial excisions: "I have expunged, without ceremony," he writes in the preface, "all that which the writers had better never have written."

7. Of the plays by Beaumont and Fletcher, Hazlitt writes: "*The Maid's Tragedy* is one of the poorest. The nature of the distress is of the most disagreeable and repulsive kind; and not the less so, because it is entirely improbable and uncalled for." "Ben Jonson, Ford, and Massinger," *Lectures Chiefly on the Dramatic Literature of the Age of Elizabeth* (London: John Warren, 1821), 145.

8. TSE's brackets; from Coleridge's "Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher, and Massinger," in "Lectures and Notes of 1818," *Lectures and Notes upon Shakespeare and Other English Poets*, ed. T. Ashe (London: George Bell and Sons, 1883), 404. Philip Massinger (1583-1640).

9. Quoting from the 5 Apr 1833 entry in *Specimens of the Table Talk of the Late Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (1835), Swinburne writes: "his opinion that 'Massinger often deals in exaggerated passion' is but ill supported by the instance he cites in support of it" (176). Swinburne quotes elsewhere from "Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher, and Massinger" in Coleridge's *Lectures and Notes upon Shakespeare*: "The unnaturally irrational passions and strange whims of feeling which Massinger delights to draw, deprive the reader of all sound interest in the characters" (406).

10. Swinburne includes John Lyly, author of *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* but also a successful comic playwright for the Blackfriars Theatre, on a list of Shakespeare's predecessors whose contributions "are hardly mentionable at all, except from a chronological point of view" (4). In his chapter on Shirley, Swinburne writes, "Of Shakespeare or of Marlowe or of Webster we can hardly hope to be reminded while reading Shirley" (289).

11†. In *Ath*: "*the Duchess of Malfy*"

12. Shirley, *The Cardinal* (1653) V.iii.284-85.

13. Webster, *The White Devil* V.vi.245-46.

14†. In *Ath*: "aware, after this book and after the *Age of Shakespeare*"

Swinburne also wrote *A Study of Shakespeare* (1880), *A Study of Ben Jonson* (1889), and *The Age of Shakespeare* (1908).

15. Thomas Sackville (1536-1608) was the author of the first English play in blank verse, *Gorboduc* (1562), which TSE assigned during the second unit of his Extension course (1.754).

16. Comic playwright and disciple of Ben Jonson, Richard Brome (1590-1652) wrote *The Sparagus Garden* (1640) and *The Antipodes* (1640).

17. In the passage to which TSE refers, Swinburne ranks Ford "far above" not Shirley but Philip Massinger, and he asserts that Tourneur "stands higher than Ford; and Webster, if compared to them, is as Shakespeare if compared with Webster" (169).

18. TSE's brackets; 151.

19†. In *Ath*: "most important essay in this book, the essay on Chapman"; the *Ath* version printed an asterisk after "Chapman" and a footnote, perhaps by editor John Middleton Murry, referring to the ongoing debate in the *Athenaeum* (11 July-24 Oct 1919) over the accessibility of the English classics: "It may be mentioned, with a thought to the 'inaccessible heritage,' that this essay forms the introduction to Volume II of the complete Chapman in the edition published

by Messrs. Chatto & Windus." For TSE's contribution to the debate, see "Our Inaccessible Heritage" (147).

20†. In *Ath*: "which we must associate with Chapman."

21. Swinburne writes of "the heavy and convulsive movement of the broken and jarring sentences" in Chapman's work and of "the incessant byplay of incongruous digressions and impenetrable allusions" that make it obscure and difficult (24). On Chapman's relationship to Jonson: "He alone . . . among all the great men of his great age, had anything in common with Jonson" (122).

22. From Chapman's *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois* (1613), V.i.315-20 and *Bussy D'Ambois* (1607), V.i.216-17. Both passages are marked in the margin of TSE's Mermaid edition, *George Chapman*, ed. William Lyon Phelps (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1895).

23†. In *Ath*: "But the quality in question"

24†. In *Ath*: "they had some quality of"

25. Thomas Lovell Beddoes (1803-49). TSE owned the Muses' Library edition of *The Poems of Thomas Lovell Beddoes*, ed. Ramsay Colles (London: G. Routledge, 1907).

26. Swinburne's last dramatic work, *The Duke of Gandia* (1908).

27†. In *Ath*: "We must believe that Swinburne's essay would have"; the subsequent paragraph was added in *SW*.

28. Literary scholar A. C. Bradley (1851-1935), youngest brother of philosopher F. H. Bradley, was former Oxford professor of poetry and author of *Shakespearean Tragedy: Lectures on Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth* (1904), which TSE later called "a needless luxury" (407). Edmund Gosse, Swinburne's editor and friend, was author of *Swinburne: Personal Recollections* (1909) and *The Life of Swinburne* (1917); he presided over a poetry reading at which TSE and a group of younger poets read in Dec 1917. When TSE later considered obtaining his permission to print one of Swinburne's early manuscripts in the *Criterion*, he wrote to Pound on 22 Oct 1922: "Gosse is certainly the last person in England to give me any assistance if he could avoid it" (*L1* 767).

Hamlet[1]

Few critics have ever admitted that *Hamlet* the play is the primary problem, and Hamlet the character only secondary.[2†] And Hamlet the character has had an especial temptation for that most dangerous type of critic: the critic with a mind which is naturally of the creative order, but which through some weakness in creative power exercises itself in criticism instead. These minds often find in Hamlet a vicarious existence for their own artistic realization. Such a mind had Goethe, who made of Hamlet a Werther; and such had Coleridge, who made of Hamlet a Coleridge; and probably neither of these men in writing about Hamlet remembered that his first business was to study a work of art.[3] The kind of criticism that Goethe and Coleridge produced, in writing of Hamlet, is the most misleading kind possible. For they both possessed unquestionable critical insight, and both make their critical aberrations the more plausible by the substitution – of their own Hamlet for Shakespeare's – which their creative gift effects. We should be thankful that Walter Pater did not fix his attention on this play.

Two writers of our time, Mr. J. M. Robertson and Professor Stoll of the University of Minnesota, have issued small books which can be praised for moving in the other direction.[4†] Mr. Stoll performs a service in recalling to our attention the labours of the critics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,[5*] observing that

> they knew less about psychology than more recent Hamlet critics, but they were nearer in spirit to Shakespeare's art; and as they insisted on the importance of the effect of the whole rather than on the importance of the leading character, they were nearer, in their old-fashioned way, to the secret of dramatic art in general.[6]

Qua work of art, the work of art cannot be interpreted; there is nothing to interpret; we can only criticize it according to standards, in comparison to other works of art; and for "interpretation" the chief task is the presentation of relevant historical facts which the reader is not assumed to know. Mr. Robertson points out, very pertinently, how critics have failed in their "interpretation" of *Hamlet* by ignoring what ought to be very obvious: that

Hamlet is a stratification, that it represents the efforts of a series of men, each making what he could out of the work of his predecessors. The *Hamlet* of Shakespeare will appear to us very differently if, instead of treating the whole action of the play as due to Shakespeare's design, we perceive his *Hamlet* to be superposed upon much cruder material which persists even in the final form.

We know that there was an older play by Thomas Kyd, that extraordinary dramatic (if not poetic) genius who was in all probability the author of two plays so dissimilar as the *Spanish Tragedy* and *Arden of Feversham*;[7] and what this play was like we can guess from three clues: from the *Spanish Tragedy* itself, from the tale of Belleforest upon which Kyd's *Hamlet* must have been based, and from a version acted in Germany in Shakespeare's lifetime which bears strong evidence of having been adapted from the earlier, not from the later, play.[8] From these three sources it is clear that in the earlier play the motive was a revenge-motive simply; that the action or delay is caused, as in the *Spanish Tragedy*, solely by the difficulty of assassinating a monarch surrounded by guards; and that the "madness" of Hamlet was feigned in order to escape suspicion, and successfully. In the final play of Shakespeare, on the other hand, there is a motive which is more important than that of revenge, and which explicitly "blunts" the latter; the delay in revenge is unexplained on grounds of necessity or expediency; and the effect of the "madness" is not to lull but to arouse the king's suspicion. The alteration is not complete enough, however, to be convincing. Furthermore, there are verbal parallels so close to the *Spanish Tragedy* as to leave no doubt that in places Shakespeare was merely *revising* the text of Kyd. And finally there are unexplained scenes – the Polonius-Laertes and the Polonius-Reynaldo scenes – for which there is little excuse; these scenes are not in the verse style of Kyd, and not beyond doubt in the style of Shakespeare. These Mr. Robertson believes to be scenes in the original play of Kyd reworked by a third hand, perhaps Chapman, before Shakespeare touched the play.[9] And he concludes, with very strong show of reason, that the original play of Kyd was, like certain other revenge plays, in two parts of five acts each. The upshot of Mr. Robertson's examination is, we believe, irrefragable: that Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, so far as it is Shakespeare's, is a play dealing with the effect of a mother's guilt upon her son, and that Shakespeare was unable to impose this motive successfully upon the "intractable" material of the old play.[10]

Of the intractability there can be no doubt. So far from being Shakespeare's masterpiece, the play is most certainly an artistic failure. In several ways the play is puzzling, and disquieting as is none of the others. Of all the plays it is the longest and is possibly the one on which Shakespeare spent most pains; and yet he has left in it superfluous and inconsistent scenes which even hasty revision should have noticed. The versification is variable. Lines like

> Look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
> Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill,[11]

are of the Shakespeare of *Romeo and Juliet*. The lines in Act V. Sc. ii.,

> Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting
> That would not let me sleep . . .
>
> Up from my cabin,
> My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark
> Grop'd I to find out them: had my desire;
> Finger'd their packet;[12]

are of his quite mature. Both workmanship and thought are in an unstable position. We are surely justified in attributing the play, with that other profoundly interesting play of "intractable" material and astonishing versification, *Measure for Measure*, to a period of crisis, after which follow the tragic successes which culminate in *Coriolanus*. *Coriolanus* may be not as "interesting" as *Hamlet*, but it is, with *Antony and Cleopatra*, Shakespeare's most assured artistic success. And probably more people have thought *Hamlet* a work of art because they found it interesting, than have found it interesting because it is a work of art. It is the "Mona Lisa" of literature.

The grounds of *Hamlet*'s failure are not immediately obvious. Mr. Robertson is undoubtedly correct in concluding that the essential emotion of the play is the feeling of a son towards a guilty mother:

> [Hamlet's] tone is that of one who has suffered tortures on the score of his mother's degradation. . . . The guilt of a mother is an almost intolerable motive for drama, but it had to be maintained and emphasized to supply a psychological solution, or rather a hint of one.[13]

This, however, is by no means the whole story. It is not merely the "guilt of a mother" that cannot be handled as Shakespeare handled the suspicion

of Othello, the infatuation of Antony, or the pride of Coriolanus. The subject might conceivably have expanded into a tragedy like these, intelligible, self-complete, in the sunlight. *Hamlet*, like the sonnets, is full of some stuff that the writer could not drag to light, contemplate, or manipulate into art. And when we search for this feeling, we find it, as in the sonnets, very difficult to localize. You cannot point to it in the speeches; indeed, if you examine the two famous soliloquies you see the versification of Shakespeare, but a content which might be claimed by another, perhaps by the author of the *Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois*, Act V. Sc. i.[14] We find Shakespeare's *Hamlet* not in the action, not in any quotations that we might select, so much as in an unmistakable tone which is unmistakably not in the earlier play.

The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an "objective correlative"; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that *particular* emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked.[15] If you examine any of Shakespeare's more successful tragedies, you will find this exact equivalence; you will find that the state of mind of Lady Macbeth walking in her sleep has been communicated to you by a skilful accumulation of imagined sensory impressions; the words of Macbeth on hearing of his wife's death strike us as if, given the sequence of events, these words were automatically released by the last event in the series.[16] The artistic "inevitability" lies in this complete adequacy of the external to the emotion; and this is precisely what is deficient in *Hamlet*. Hamlet (the man) is dominated by an emotion which is inexpressible, because it is in *excess* of the facts as they appear. And the supposed identity of Hamlet with his author is genuine to this point: that Hamlet's bafflement at the absence of objective equivalent to his feelings is a prolongation of the bafflement of his creator in the face of his artistic problem. Hamlet is up against the difficulty that his disgust is occasioned by his mother, but that his mother is not an adequate equivalent for it; his disgust envelops and exceeds her. It is thus a feeling which he cannot understand; he cannot objectify it, and it therefore remains to poison life and obstruct action. None of the possible actions can satisfy it; and nothing that Shakespeare can do with the plot can express Hamlet for him. And it must be noticed that the very nature of the *données* of the problem precludes objective equivalence. To have heightened the criminality of Gertrude would have been to provide the formula for a totally different emotion in Hamlet; it is just *because* her character is so negative and

insignificant that she arouses in Hamlet the feeling which she is incapable of representing.

The "madness" of Hamlet lay to Shakespeare's hand; in the earlier play a simple ruse, and to the end, we may presume, understood as a ruse by the audience. For Shakespeare it is less than madness and more than feigned. The levity of Hamlet, his repetition of phrase, his puns, are not part of a deliberate plan of dissimulation, but a form of emotional relief. In the character Hamlet it is the buffoonery of an emotion which can find no outlet in action;[17] in the dramatist it is the buffoonery of an emotion which he cannot express in art. The intense feeling, ecstatic or terrible, without an object or exceeding its object, is something which every person of sensibility has known; it is doubtless a subject of study for pathologists.[18†] It often occurs in adolescence: the ordinary person puts these feelings to sleep, or trims down his feelings to fit the business world; the artist keeps them alive by his ability to intensify the world to his emotions. The Hamlet of Laforgue is an adolescent; the Hamlet of Shakespeare is not, he has not that explanation and excuse.[19] We must simply admit that here Shakespeare tackled a problem which proved too much for him. Why he attempted it at all is an insoluble puzzle; under compulsion of what experience he attempted to express the inexpressibly horrible, we cannot ever know. We need a great many facts in his biography; and we should like to know whether, and when, and after or at the same time as what personal experience, he read Montaigne, II. xii, *Apologie de Raimond Sebond*.[20] We should have, finally, to know something which is by hypothesis unknowable, for we assume it to be an experience which, in the manner indicated, exceeded the facts. We should have to understand things which Shakespeare did not understand himself.[21†]

NOTES

1. As printed in *SE*; originally "Hamlet and His Problems," *The Athenaeum*, 4665 (26 Sept 1919), 940-41, composed by 14 Sept (*L1* 396); a review of *The Problem of "Hamlet,"* by J. M. Robertson (London: Allen & Unwin, 1919), pp. 90; revised under the original title in *SW*.

2†. In *Ath*: "We are very glad to find Hamlet in the hands of so learned and scrupulous a critic as Mr. Robertson. Few critics have even admitted"; in *SW*: "Few critics have even admitted"

3. TSE echoes Robertson, who suggests that, in *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, Goethe refashions Hamlet in the likeness of the protagonist of his own first novel, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*: "To me it is clear that Shakespeare meant, in the present case, to represent the effects of a great action laid upon a soul unfit for the performance of it." Trans. Thomas Carlyle

(London: John C. Nimmo, 1903), 304. According to *Specimens of the Table Talk of the Late Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (1835), Coleridge identified with Hamlet's "abstracting and generalizing habit": "I have a smack of Hamlet myself, if I may say so" (24 June 1827).

4†. In *SW*: "Two recent writers, Mr. J. M. Robertson and Professor Stoll"; this paragraph and the following quotation were not in *Ath*.

TSE later claimed to have been "hand-in-glove" at the time of this essay with J. M. Robertson, best known for his "disintegrationist" theories about the composite authorship of Shakespeare's plays (*TCC* 19). Elmer Edgar Stoll (1874-1959) was the author of *Hamlet: An Historical and Comparative Study* (University of Minnesota Press, 1919).

5*. TSE's note: "I have never, by the way, seen a cogent refutation of Thomas Rymer's objections to *Othello*." In *A Short View of Tragedy* (1693), translator and official court historiographer Thomas Rymer (1641-1713) criticized *Othello* for its improbable plot, unnatural characters, and moral depravity: "Nothing is more odious in Nature than an improbable lye; And, certainly, never was any Play fraught, like this of *Othello*, with improbabilities"; he calls it "plainly none other than a Bloody Farce, without salt or savour." *Critical Works of Thomas Rymer*, ed. Curt Zimansky (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1956), 134, 164.

6. Stoll, *Hamlet: An Historical and Comparative Study*, 64; the "critics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries" to whom Stoll refers include Jeremy Collier, James Drake, John Dennis, and Sir Thomas Hanmer. "The psychological Hamlet," he concludes, was "exclusively the discovery, or invention, of the Romantic Age" (12).

7. Of the so-called ur-Hamlet, the presumably lost play that some believe to have been Shakespeare's source, Robertson writes, "Most critics have long been agreed that there was a pre-Shakespearean *Hamlet* . . . and that its author was Thomas Kyd" (33). TSE had assigned both *Arden of Feversham* (which he assumed the work of Kyd), a domestic tragedy dealing with a nearly contemporaneous murder, and the prototypical revenge play, Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, in his 1918 Extension course (1.754).

8. François de Belleforest (1530-83) translated and adapted the legend of Amleth in his collection of prose tales *Histoires tragiques* (1580) from the thirteenth-century history of the Danes, *Gesta Danorum* (1514) by Saxo Grammaticus. Of the German "version" of *Hamlet, Der Bestrafte Brudermord* [*Fratricide Punished*], Robertson writes, "we must examine the old German play . . . known to have been played . . . at the Court of Dresden in 1626. This, though preserved only through a manuscript of 1710, is at bottom clearly an early form of our Hamlet" (42).

9. In the preface to *The Problem of "Hamlet"* Robertson refers readers to his conclusions about Chapman's contributions to the Shakespeare canon in *Shakespeare and Chapman* (1917), which contains "the most revolutionary of the critical inferences to which the author has thus far been led" (7).

10. Robertson concludes: "What Shakespeare could not do, no man could have done. What he did remains a miracle of dramatic imagination. . . . He who will may argue that Shakespeare should not have accepted intractable material. Let him tell us whether he would rather have been without Hamlet, and whether he cannot see that the practical compulsion to handle or retain intractable material underlies half a dozen of the Shakespeare plays" (75).

11. *Hamlet* I.i.166-67 .

12. *Hamlet* V.ii.4-5, 12-15.

13. TSE's brackets; Robertson, 73.

14. The final act of Chapman's tragedy features the risen shade of Bussy D'Ambois awaiting his revenge, the unfolding of the king's treacherous plot to murder the Duke of Guise, and the final soliloquy and suicide of the protagonist, Clermont D'Ambois.

15. Among the many possible sources for the term "objective correlative" are Santayana's "correlative objects" from "The Elements and Function of Poetry" in *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* (1900); John Henry Newman's "Objective correlative" in sermon XLI, *Sermons Preached before the University of Oxford* (1884); Edmund Husserl's "objektives Korrelat" in *Logische Untersuchungen* (1900-01); and Washington Allston's "objective correlative" in *Lectures on Art* (1850), though TSE was surprised to learn of the latter; see "A Letter from Eliot," *The New Statesman* (5 Mar 1965), 361. Later TSE referred to popular critical phrases like this one as "conceptual symbols for emotional preferences," and he added: "The 'objective correlative' in the essay on Hamlet may stand for my bias towards the more mature plays of Shakespeare" (*TCC* 19).

16. *Macbeth* V.i ("Out, damned spot! out, I say!") and V.v ("To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow, / Creeps in this petty pace from day to day").

17. TSE echoes Arnold's observation in the "Preface" to *Poems* (1853): "What then are the situations, from the representation of which, though accurate, no poetical enjoyment can be derived? They are those in which the suffering finds no vent in action."

18†. In *Ath* and *SW*: "doubtless a study to pathologists"

19. In "Hamlet, ou les suites de la piété filiale" [Hamlet, or the Results of Filial Piety], part of his *Moralités légendaires* (1887), Jules Laforgue describes the dandified Hamlet as a "young insatiable prince." TSE first read of Laforgue's version of Hamlet in *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*; in Aug 1916 he translated "a few pages" of Laforgue's "Hamlet" in the unrealized hopes of producing an English version of *Moralités* with Ezra Pound (*L1* 159).

20. Montaigne's "Apology for Raymond Sebond" (*Essais*, 1580) is a skeptical critique of the high valuation of human reason in Raymond Sebond's *Liber creaturarum*, which Montaigne had translated earlier in his career. In the second volume of the Temple Classics edition that he owned – *The Essayes of Michael Lord of Montaigne*, 2 vols (London: Dent, 1915) – TSE dog-eared page 71 on which the following passage appears: "Those which have compared our life unto a dreame, have happily had more reason so to doe, then they were aware. When we dreame, our soule liveth, worketh and exerciseth all her faculties, even, and as much, as when it waketh; and if more softly, and obscurely; yet verily not so, as that it may admit so great a difference, as there is between a dark night, and a cleare day: Yes as between a night and a shadow: There it sleepeth, here it slumbreth: More or lesse, they are ever in darknesses, yea Cimmerian darknesses. We wake sleeping, and sleep waking. In my sleep I see not so cleare; yet can I never find my waking cleare enough, or without dimnesse" (71). He would have consulted the original French in his edition of *Essais*, 2 vols (Paris: Librairie Garnier frères, 1872). TSE likely discovered the connection in Robertson's *Montaigne and Shakspere* (1897), in which Robertson quotes the identical passage from the "Apologie."

21†. In *Ath*, the review concluded with the following sentences, which were deleted in *SW*: "In the Storm in *Lear*, and in the last scene of *Othello*, Shakespeare triumphed in tearing art from the impossible: *Hamlet* is a failure. The material proved intractable in a deeper sense than that intended by Mr. Robertson in his admirable essay."

Murmuring of Innumerable Bees[1]

An unsigned review of *Coterie: An Illustrated Quarterly*, 2 (Sept 1919). Pp. 64.[2]

The Athenaeum, 4666 (3 Oct 1919) 972

It is impossible to criticize in detail the assembled work of sixteen poets in a quarterly; especially in a quarterly so little *tendencieux* as *Coterie* – in spite of its alarming name.[3] The intention of the editors appears to have been merely to collect the best poems which the best poets of a certain generation (and there is a certain generation) had at their disposal during the two or three months in which material for a quarterly can be collected. The attempt has been decidedly successful; the reviewer's epithet "representative" must be bestowed. The only poets of whose verse we notice the absence are those whose names we confidently expect to appear in following issues. That these issues will appear is warmly to be hoped for; and we may hope that, besides poetry, they will contain also some prose expressions of the poets' opinions of each other, their views on the art of poetry and on the state of English literature in general. Even as it is, *Coterie* forms a current document which is not duplicated in the periodical press.

The verse-producing units circulating on the surface of Great Britain may be reduced roughly to four generations: the first, the aged, represented by the great name of Hardy, but including several figures in process of obliviscence; the middle-aged, including Mr. Yeats and a small number of honoured names; the ageing, including the Georgian poets and the curious shapes of Mr. Eliot and Mr. Pound: all these ages have already lined their nests or dug their graves. We could, at will, pronounce a fitting obituary over any one of these writers except the first mentioned. But anything we say about the present generation must be revised in the stop press to-morrow. Yet we think we can perceive two currents, travelling in opposite directions (or perhaps it is *from* two opposite directions), in one or the other of which most of these poets float. In or from one direction come Mr. Chaman Lall, Mr. Russell Green, and notably Mr. Conrad Aiken. The last of these three has steadily throughout his later work pursued a consistent direction; which is, briefly, to express the inexpressible by expressing the

impossibility of expression. He is always just on the point of success; and when he does succeed it will be a notable triumph and a big haul. He is interested in pure feeling for which there is no equivalent in the visible world. But in his attempts he is brought, as are the other poets mentioned with him, and sometimes (not here) Mr. Huxley, to the point of merely asking questions ("Priapus? who was he?").[4] We believe that when he finds what he wants he will stop asking questions and provide answers to the questions we are never conscious enough to ask.

The opposite current is that of the Image. Here Mr. Aldington and Mr. Read leap out, and present us each with his own kind – the kinds are very different. With Mr. Aldington it has always been true (as we should expect from the theory) that nine out of ten, being merely images, pass like clouds: and the tenth, because it is more than an image and has some other seriousness, arrests attention.[5] His "In Via Sestina" is not to be forgotten. The present offerings are not as good as those in a recent *Art and Letters*;[6] but if they are not presumed to be "permanent poetry," then they are good for what they are. Mr. Read is apt to force his images; he uses big words: "ultimate" for "final," "cancroid," "serrated," "vitreous," but his second image would be very good if it *meant* something more than it does.[7]

From both of these directions we find that we turn with relief to the neat, firm, if strictly limited work of Miss Sitwell. Mr. Huxley's "Leda" is a long poem (it is creditable to the editors that they print such a long poem), which outdoes in literary sultriness Mr. Aldington's frequent natural sultriness. The first six lines are a signal success in versification; the last part of the poem gets the suspense it is meant to get; the middle is injured by a learned titter. But the author's erudition in his generation is comforting.

It is a pity that the drawings have not been selected on quite the same principle as the poems: they are rather the less interesting work of the well-arrived (or the dead – Gaudier) than the more interesting of the new.[8] Why not publish a drawing or two by Mr. Roberts?[9]

NOTES

1. From the final line of Tennyson's "Come down, O maid," in *The Princess* (1847): "every sound is sweet; / Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn, / The moan of doves in immemorial elms, / And murmuring of innumerable bees."

2. *Coterie* was published by Frank Henderson's left-wing London bookstore, The Bomb Shop, and edited by Oxford University law student Chaman Lall (1892-1973), later a member of the Indian Parliament, and poet and novelist Russell Green (b. 1893); TSE's "A Cooking Egg" had appeared in the first issue (1 May 1919). *Coterie* featured no editorial introduction and ran

for seven numbers (in six issues) between 1919 and 1921. Essays on poetry and art began appearing in the third number (Dec 1919), the first of two consecutive issues that listed TSE on the editorial committee. Richard Aldington wrote to Pound on 29 Dec 1919 about the new magazine: "They have put Lewis, Eliot, Huxley & myself on their editorial committee; it seems we might use that majority against the Squire party. . . . The spontaneous demonstration against the Gosse-Squire-Times attitude is instructive." *Richard Aldington: An Autobiography in Letters*, 55.

3. *tendencieux*: tendentious.

4. From Aiken's "Counterpoint: Priapus and the Pool" (7). Aiken was the magazine's American editor beginning in the third issue. In terms similar to those which he uses here, TSE had recently described Aiken's *The Charnel Rose* (1919) as treading "the borderline of the subliminal" (69).

5. TSE knew of Aldington but had not met him until the latter was on leave from the war in the summer of 1919. Aldington wrote on 18 July to convey his admiration for TSE's criticism ("I read your essays in the *Athenaeum* with the greatest pleasure") but also his distaste for TSE's poetry ("I feel compelled to add that I dislike your poetry very much") (*L1* 382). In his *TLS* review (22 May 1919) of the first issue of *Coterie*, Aldington called TSE's verse "delicate and disdainful" and concluded that "though his elegant wit finds its best expression in prose, his poetry possesses the charm of a more than superior irony" (274).

6. Two poems by Aldington, "Postlude" and "Concert," appeared *Art & Letters*, 2 (Winter 1918-19). TSE had previously singled out Aldington's "In the Via Sistina" (here mistitled "In Via Sestina") for praise in "Reflections on Contemporary Poetry," calling it a "regretted absentee" from Harriet Monroe's *The New Poetry*, and he applauded Aldington's *vers libre* in *Ezra Pound: His Metric and Poetry* (1.610, 1.635).

7. This issue features two of Read's imagist poems, "Smoker" and "In the West Riding," the latter of which concludes with the image of "An hydraulic pump / With up-sob and down-sump" that "Glistens and flickers in its cavernous shed . . . cowl of earth-monk's meditation" (17-18).

8. This issue included drawings and illustrations by established artists Walter Sickert, William Rothenstein, and Cora Gordon, as well as by Vorticist artist and sculptor Henri Gaudier-Brzeska (1891-1915), who died in the war on 5 June.

9. In response to TSE's suggestion, English painter William Roberts (1895-1980) was commissioned to design the cover for the next issue of *Coterie* (Dec 1919). Roberts was a member of Roger Fry's Omega Workshops and had contributed cubist illustrations to both issues of Wyndham Lewis's *BLAST*.

Humanist, Artist, and Scientist

A review of *La Pensée italienne au XVIe siècle et le courant libertin*, by J.-Roger Charbonnel

Paris: É. Champion, 1919. Pp. 720.

L'Éthique de Giordano Bruno et le deuxième dialogue du Spaccio

Traduction avec notes et commentaire, by J.-Roger Charbonnel

Paris: É. Champion, 1919. Pp. 339.[1]

The Athenaeum, 4667 (10 Oct 1919) 1014-15

M. Charbonnel's two volumes on the sixteenth century comprehend some 1,100 pages of large and small type; the learning, the apparent, the probable and the possible reading involved is overwhelming; and it cannot be supposed that the author has left much unsearched or unsaid in his subject of scholarship. To judge from the passages resuming the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, he is possessed of the French facility of generalized exposition, and the books are very readable for what they are; but even to read this digest of years of reading is a task of no common labour. So the first question that assails the reader, or more modestly the spectator, of these books, is whether the labour is worth while: not whether it was worth while for the author to write them, or worth while, abstractly, that they should be written, but whether it is worth while to read them, and as sustenance for what interest.

The question becomes more insistent when we discover that almost the only name of permanent and general importance in the books is that of Machiavelli.[2] Of all these philosophers, there is not one whom the contemporary philosopher will find necessary for his equipment. The contemporary philosopher, indeed, finds trouble enough if he will understand Plato, Aristotle and Plotinus, and a dozen other worthies from Descartes onward; and he does well if he does not somewhere in his work display an ignominious ignorance or misunderstanding of some capital point in the philosophy of one of these. The philosopher, in short, has no time for Bruno or Pomponazzi.[3] The historian, or the student of literature, on the

other hand, will shrink from the apparently needless infliction of fantastic cosmologies. But even if disdained by all of these, the study of sixteenth-century philosophy has importance for anyone who is interested in the history of the European mind; a quite different thing from the biography of all of the interesting minds in European history. The one mind which epitomizes all or nearly all that is best in these forgotten speculations, so far as one mind can do it, is the mind of Montaigne; but Montaigne is so much himself, and also so representative of some permanent attitude of the human spirit, that we overlook, in reading him, the extent to which he is representative of his time, of the tone and of the conclusions of sixteenth-century thought. And the sixteenth century was a chaotic period, which apparently has little to show for itself, but was doing the work that made the seventeenth century possible.

Why the sixteenth century, which produced such ebullient thinking, produced so little philosophy of permanent value, remains to be defined. In the seventeenth there are Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley, Descartes, Pascal, Malebranche, Spinoza, to say nothing of the heavy-weight theologians. With the exception of Spinoza these men were perhaps not more gifted than their predecessors. Pomponazzi and Bruno and Vanini threw out as many suggestions; Pietro Zabarella, the greatest of all Aristotelian commentators, was at least their equal in subtlety and profundity.[4] But there was some advantage of the time which lay with the man of the seventeenth. The world had shaken down into a kind of order: theology whisked off to its own libraries and cloisters, and art and science emerged.

The sixteenth century is a period of restless and apparently futile activity. It is a period of remarkable men, of men of vast influence, of men above mediocrity. But the men were not men of single inspiration. The pure scientist had hardly appeared, had hardly made his influence felt. For pure art, there were too many distractions. For the philosopher, there was every distraction. There was too much and too heterogeneous reading available: neo-platonic universes which combined only too well with abracadabric superstitions; cabbalistic studies which were only fomented by genuinely scientific yearnings. Further, the philosopher was often distracted by the desire to give Platonic literary form to his writings. He was readily attacked, in that excited age, by the lust of universal knowledge. He lived a public or an adventurous life. His philosophical researches led him into theological difficulties, and the theological skill almost forced upon him for self-preservation dispersed his attention. Thus he was often boastful, conceited,

polemical, and as like as not half a quack. He would confound all the frontiers of philosophy, theology, literature, science, and magic.

Yet the strange personages which parade through M. Charbonnel's pages performed two great services. They kept alive the disposition toward pure science which made the world a more tolerable place for scientists than it was for Copernicus and Galileo; and they maintained a flow of free thought against the opposition, not only of Rome, but of the other established sects as well; against Lutherans and Calvinists. Though they indulged in the oddest superstitions, their superstitions were not of custom – superstitions in the exact sense of the word, but rather wild scientific hypotheses. And though their metaphysical systems are often a mere gallimaufry[5] of Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus and the mediaeval mystics and occultists, they kept a place open for new, individual and personal thought. They were, on the whole, for the individual against the mob. Their varied and variegated thought was capable of no other synthesis than it found in the apparently formless and disconnected, but subtly unified essays of Montaigne.

From this turmoil of ideas on the Continent, Aristotelian, Platonic, neo-Platonic, Epicurean, Stoic, Averroistic, occultist, semi-scientific, England was more or less free. Giordano Bruno went to London and complained of the mud and of the bargemen; went to Oxford and complained of the manners of the dons; England went on as it was.[6] England reaped the advantage of humanism, in Florio's translation and in other ways, without having undergone the confusion.[7] England was saved by its indifference to ideas, and by the underlying indifference to theological differences, and a queen and a government who felt little zeal for religious politics. The humanistic type is represented by the mediocrity of a Bacon, but the type is not dominant. The literary artist flourished, and in later generations, after humanism was over, England produced Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley and Newton: in fact, was able to dominate the philosophy and science of Europe through the greater part of the eighteenth century.

The sixteenth century is humanistic, rather than artistic or scientific; the seventeenth century gave art and science; the eighteenth repeats in its way the confusion of the sixteenth, but its typical man would be called not humanist but journalist. They are both, that is to say, periods of transition; nor is the transition ended at the nineteenth century, for in Renan we have a person who is not exactly either artist or scientist in his rôle. The

humanist is an educator, a "publicist"; often a greater influence than either artist or scientist, and often more fascinating to the historian than either. Such a man was Bruno. He is a diverting figure: nomadic, overbearing, daring, infinitely conceited, not altogether a noble character, but with some odd sense of a "mission" which makes him cling tenaciously to his ideas at the torture, where a great scientist recanted. It is difficult, at first sight, to understand why ideas in appearance very similar should be historical curiosities in a Bruno and important creations in a Spinoza or Leibniz. But the vital principle in an idea is the amount of one man's brain condensed into that idea – is in concentration, not dispersion. That is the difference between an *intuition* and a guess thrown out. The humanist has personality; often, we might think, more than the scientist or artist. But the humanist's personality throws out the idea, centrifugal, without so much entering into it. So with Bruno; his personality is in his biography.[8] In the man of scientific or artistic temper the personality is distilled into the work, it loses its accidents, it becomes, as with Montaigne, a permanent point of view, a phase in the history of mind. Looked at in this way, and without attenuating his enormous importance, the humanist does not count, is not "serious." Now, the presence that, a little later than Bruno, rose so strangely beside the waters of the Zuyder Zee, is symbolical of all that in the ways of the sixteenth century the humanist was not. *Omnia praeclara tam difficilia quam rara sunt*.[9]

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. The texts under review are the published versions of a two-part doctoral thesis by J.-Roger Charbonnel (1880-1947), who was teaching at the Lycée de Saint-Étienne when he defended his thesis on 14 June 1919 at the Sorbonne.

2. Charbonnel devotes the entirety of chapter 4 to Italian political philosopher and historian Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527), author of *Il Principe* [*The Prince*] (1532).

3. Philosophers Giordano Bruno, Neoplatonist philosopher and author of *De gli eroici furori* [*The Heroic Furies*] (1585), and Pietro Pomponazzi (1462-1525), Aristotelian humanist whose *Tractatus de immortalitate animae* [Treatise on the Immortality of the Soul] (1516) disputed the rational demonstrability of the soul.

4. Lucilio (Giulio Cesare) Vanini (ca. 1585-1619), author of *Amphitheatrum aeternae providentiae* (1615); Giacomo (Jacopo) Zabarella, chair of Natural Philosophy at the University of Padua and author of commentaries on numerous Aristotelian texts, several of which TSE studied while at Oxford in 1914 ("The Posterior Analytics I find very difficult," he wrote on 9 Nov 1914, "I accompany it with the commentary of Zabarella, which is remarkably good"

[*L1* 74]), and upon which he comments in "The Development of Leibniz's Monadism" (1.460, n. 48).

5. gallimaufry: a hodge-podge.

6. In the midst of his lifelong travels, Bruno stayed in London and Oxford from 1583 to 1585 at the home of the French ambassador, Michel de Castelnau. In his 1916 review of William Boulting's biography of Bruno, TSE suggested that "some of his most entertaining reminiscences are of Oxford and London" and that Bruno came to "a citadel of Aristotelianism to carry on his war against Aristotle, and the dons were not well pleased. The irascible Italian writes that the fellows and tutors 'knew much more about beer than about Greek' " (1.490).

7. The first English translation of Montaigne's *Essais* by John Florio was published in 1603.

8. TSE made a similar claim in his review of Bruno's biography: "Bruno's philosophy was not very clearly thought out, and its permanent value is slight, but the personality and career of the man are of enduring interest" (1.490).

9. *Trans*: "All excellent things are as difficult as they are rare"; the last line in the *Ethics* (1677) of Spinoza, who was born and raised in Amsterdam near the Zuiderzee, formerly an inlet of the North Sea. The translation given is from the Dent edition (1910) that TSE owned and annotated (*Spinoza's Ethics and "De intellectus emendatione,"* trans. Andrew Boyle) (Houghton); he consulted the Latin text in his copy of the *Opera*, vol 1, ed. Johannes van Vloten and J. P. N. Land (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1895) (King's).

TSE's sentence adapts Pater's description of the *Mona Lisa* in "Leonardo da Vinci": "The presence that rose thus so strangely beside the waters, is expressive of what in the ways of a thousand years men had come to desire." *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (London: Macmillan, 1873), 98.

War-paint and Feathers

A review of *The Path on the Rainbow: An Anthology of Songs and Chants from the Indians of North America*

ed. George W. Cronyn

New York: Boni & Liveright, 1918. Pp. xxxii + 347.[1]

The Athenaeum, 4668 (17 Oct 1919) 1036

The Ustumsjiji are a vanishing race. The last repositories of the Monophysite heresy, persecuted and massacred for centuries (on religious grounds) by the Armenians, the remnants of a unique civilization have taken refuge in the remote gorges of the Akim-Baba Range. Here the explorer discovered them, and was privileged to hear their *Shikkamim*, or wandering bards, prophets, and medicine-men, recite or chant, to the music of the *pippin* or one-stringed gourd, the traditional poetry of love, warfare, and theology. The explorer has made a translation or interpretation, in *vers libre*, and the product is declared to be superior, in its subtle and mystical simplicity, to anything that can be bought second-hand on Charing Cross Road.[2]

But suddenly, egged on by New York and Chicago *intelligentsia*, the romantic Chippaway bursts into the drawing-room, and among murmurs of approval declaims his

> Maple Sugar Song
>
> Maple sugar
> is the only thing
> that satisfies me. [23]

The approval becomes acclamation. The Chippaway has the last word in subtlety, simplicity, and poeticality.[3] Furthermore, his Continent is backing him. For, says the editor,

> it becomes appropriate and important that this collection of American Indian verse should be brought to public notice at a time when the whole instinctive movement of the American people is for a deeper footing in their native soil.[4]

The Red Man is here: what are we to do with him, except to feed him on maple sugar? And it is not only the Red Men, but the aborigines of every complexion and climate, who have arrived, each tribe pressing upon us its own claims to distinction in art and literature.

Within the time of a brief generation it has become evident that some smattering of anthropology is as essential to culture as Rollin's Universal History.[5] Just as it is necessary to know something about Freud and something about Fabre, so it is necessary to know something about the medicine-man and his works.[6] Not necessary, perhaps not even desirable, to know all the theories about him, to peruse all the works of Miss Harrison, Cooke,[7] Rendel Harris, Lévy-Bruhl or Durkheim. But one ought, surely, to have read at least one book such as those of Spencer and Gillen on the Australians, or Codrington on the Melanesians.[8] And as it is certain that some study of primitive man furthers our understanding of civilized man, so it is certain that primitive art and poetry help our understanding of civilized art and poetry. Primitive art and poetry can even, through the studies and experiments of the artist or poet, revivify the contemporary activities. The maxim, Return to the sources, is a good one. More intelligibly put, it is that the poet should know everything that has been accomplished in poetry (accomplished, not merely produced) since its beginnings – in order to know what he is doing himself. He should be aware of all the metamorphoses of poetry that illustrate the stratifications of history that cover savagery. For the artist is, in an impersonal sense, the most conscious of men; he is therefore the most and the least civilized and civilizable; he is the most competent to understand both civilized and primitive.

Consequently, he is the most ready and the most able of men to learn from the savage; he is the first man to perceive that there are aspects in which the lays of the Dimbovitza or the Arapajos are a more profitable study and a more dignified performance than *Aurora Leigh* or *Kehama*.[9] But, as he is the first person to see the merits of the savage, the barbarian and the rustic, he is also the first person to see how the savage, the barbarian and the rustic can be improved upon; he is the last person to see the savage in a romantic light, or to yield to the weak credulity of crediting the savage with any gifts of mystical insight or artistic feeling that he does not possess himself. He will welcome the publication of primitive poetry, because it has more significance, in relation to its own age or culture, than *Kehama* and *Aurora Leigh* have for theirs. But he wants it more carefully documented than the present book; when the translator uses the word

"beauty," the contemporary poet wants to know the Navajo equivalent for this word, and how near an equivalent it is.[10] Also, to what extent is an "interpretation" allowed to diverge from a "translation"? The poet and the anthropologist both want to be provided with these data, and they are the only persons whose desires should be consulted. The poet and the artist and the anthropologist will be the last people to tolerate the whooping brave, with his tale of maple sugar, as a drawing-room phenomenon. And the artist, if he gets a chance, in a dinner-table pause, to say something of interest – when he speaks of the Solomon Islanders, it will not be *instead* of whatever he may have to say about Mantegna.[11]

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. George W. Cronyn (b. 1888) was the author of the play *The Sandbar Queen* (1918), a volume of verse (*Poems*, 1914), and an unpublished thesis for Columbia University, "The Frontier in American Literature prior to the Civil War" (1917).

2. TSE's parodic introductory paragraph combines anthropological fictions evidently of his own making – the Ustumsjiji and the Akim-Baba Range, which recall similar names in Spencer and Gillen's *Northern Tribes of Central Australia* (cited by TSE below), such as the Tjingilli tribe and the Ashburton Range – with details of ancient Christian sects about whom he had been reading in Gibbon's *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Gibbon calls the Armenians "the most warlike subjects of Rome" in Chapter 49 and discusses their connection to the Monophysite heresy in chapter 47, to which TSE also alludes in "A Foreign Mind" (73). The heavily commercial Charing Cross Road in Westminster, London, is renowned for its secondhand booksellers.

3. The "Chippewa" (also "Ojibwa" or "Ojibway") were a Native American tribe that occupied the areas of North America now known as Minnesota, North Dakota, Michigan's Upper Peninsula, and Manitoba, Canada. *The Path on the Rainbow* includes this and other translations from the Chippewa, including "Ojibwa War Songs" and "Songs of the Chippewa."

4. *The Path on the Rainbow*, xvii; the introduction from which TSE quotes was written not by the editor Cronyn but by American essayist Mary Hunter Austin (1868-1934).

5. TSE likely refers to the expansive, twelve-volume *Histoire ancienne* [*Ancient History*] (1730-38) by French historian Charles Rollin (1661-1741); he may also be recalling the title of *Discours sur l'histoire universelle* [*Discourse on Universal History*] (1681), its precursor in the genre of all-encompassing historical narratives, by Jacques Bénigne Bossuet.

6. Jean-Henri Fabre (1823-1915), French entomologist and author of *Souvenirs entomologiques* [*Book of Insects*] (10 vols, 1879–1907).

7. TSE refers to Jane Ellen Harrison, A. B. Cook (misprinted "Cooke" here), J. Rendel Harris, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, and Émile Durkheim.

8. Spencer and Gillen collaborated on two influential studies of Aboriginal ritual and culture, *Native Tribes of Central Australia* (1899) and *Northern Tribes of Central Australia* (1904); see "Durkheim" (1.420). Anglican missionary and ethnologist Robert Henry Codrington (1830-1922) published *The Melanesians: Studies in their Anthropology and Folk-lore* in 1891.

9. *The Bard of the Dimbovitza* (ed. Hélène Vacaresco, 1892, 1897), a two-volume collection of Romanian folk songs. The Arapajos (or Arapaho) are a Native American tribe in Wyoming and Oklahoma. TSE refers to Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh* (1857) and Robert Southey's *The Curse of Kehama* (1810).

10. In "The Mountain Chant of the Navajo" in this volume, trans. Washington Matthews: "Make beautiful all that is before me. / Make beautiful all that is behind me. / It is done in beauty. / It is done in beauty. / It is done in beauty. / It is done in beauty" (83). In describing the character of the Navajo songs and the "considerable difficulty" of translating them, Matthews explains, "In order to simplify the meaning of certain chants, repetitive phrases are set as refrains" (82).

11. TSE would have read about the indigenous Melanesian peoples of the Solomon Islands, an archipelago and nation in the Southwest Pacific, in Codrington's *The Melanesians*, cited above. He wrote to Sydney Schiff in Mar 1920 that Andrea Mantegna (1431-1506) "is a painter for whom I have a particular admiration – there is none who appeals to me more strongly. Do you know the St. Sebastian in the Franchetti's house on the Grand Canal?" (*L1* 454-55). TSE had recently used the motto at the foot of this painting, which he saw in Venice in summer 1911, as part of the epigraph to "Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar": "nil nisi divinum stabile est; caetera fumus" [nothing is stable save the divine; the rest is smoke].

The Method of Mr. Pound

A review of *Quia Pauper Amavi*, by Ezra Pound

London: The Egoist Press. Pp. 51.

The Athenaeum, 4669 (24 Oct 1919) 1065-66

The present volume of poems by Mr. Pound is probably the most significant book that he has published. It is, at all events, the most coherent extended work since *Personae* and *Exultations*; and it makes easier the adoption of a view of his poetry which many readers have consistently ignored.[1] For it shows, what had not been self-evident before, that he has pursued a constant aim with a deliberate and conscious method. Upon reading his first books, we might not have been certain that the beauty discovered there was more than accidental and derivative; and from his later books we might not have been certain that he was doing more than reaching out and about for a new inspiration. This book, the best formed, supplies a clue to the whole process, and makes evident that, whether we like or dislike his work, we cannot accept and reject it here and there, but must acknowledge the whole design. The fusion and transmutation of elements, which has gone on continuously, is not yet complete; it is not yet decided whether there are elements which will never be completely absorbed; but there is obviously a sustained purpose which must be respected.

Mr. Pound's early work, taken by itself, might give the impression of being a brilliant and immensely appreciative piece of archaeology.[2] What was not dependent upon the assimilation of mediaeval literature seemed to be slightly distorted by the influence of Mr. Yeats, although a more powerful intelligence than that of Mr. Yeats was visible. There was, of course, the much more beneficent influence of Browning. *Ripostes* was patently a departure, but the work was, on the whole, slighter. It contained, however, one important evidence of development: the "Seafarer."[3] From the earlier verse it might have seemed that Mr. Pound inclined to bury himself and his readers in the taste or *friandise* of a particular past.[4] The "Seafarer" was evidence of a much more extensive historical sense, the extent of which implied that the point, the only possible point, upon which such various

historical interests could converge was the present. And Mr. Pound has steadily become more modern by becoming, or by showing himself to be, more universal. *Cathay*, appearing by itself, was hardly taken in this way by the public: it was taken rather as the opening of a new and delightful side-show in the Magic City of European Literature.[5] So far as Mr. Pound's example has led to the opening of new side-shows, it may have done harm for which Mr. Pound cannot be held responsible; but in retrospect we ought to be able to see that *Cathay* is less merely the Chinese than *Canzone* were merely the mediaeval.[6] The style owes nothing to the Chinese inspiration; it is a development – in fact, the development – of Mr. Pound's style, which proved a good vehicle for transporting the content of the Chinese poem; the Cathay cathartic may have helped to purge Mr. Pound; but its importance is found in its place in his work, and not in its being Chinese.

The historical method is, of course, the one which suits Mr. Pound's temperament; it is also a conscious and consistent application of a procedure suggested by Browning, which Mr. Pound applies more consciously and consistently than Browning did. Most poets grasp their own time, the life of the world as it stirs before their eyes, at one convulsion or not at all. But they have no method for closing in upon it. Mr. Pound's method is indirect and one extremely difficult to pursue. As the present is no more than the present existence, the present significance, of the entire past, Mr. Pound proceeds by acquiring the entire past; and when the entire past is acquired, the constituents fall into place and the present is revealed. Such a method involves immense capacities of learning and of dominating one's learning, and the peculiarity of expressing oneself through historical masks. Mr. Pound has a unique gift for expression through some phase of past life. This is not archaeology or pedantry, but one method, and a very high method, of poetry. It is a method which allows of no arrest, for the poet imposes upon himself, necessarily, the condition of continually changing his mask; *hic et ubique*, then we'll shift our ground.[7]

At the present stage the process is and must be incomplete. It is still, in consequence, possible to argue that Mr. Pound's method is due to timidity rather than to a great integrity. He is more himself (if we content ourselves with looking at his work part and part), more at ease, behind the mask of Arnaut, Bertrand, Guido, Li Po and Propertius, than when he speaks in his own person.[8] He must hide to reveal himself. But if we collate all these disguises we find not a mere collection of green-room properties, but Mr. Pound.

This book contains four divisions – Provençal, Contemporanea, Three Cantos, and Homage to Sextus Propertius. The first is an improvement upon earlier work chiefly in technical merit; but it will be found that the effect of the author's more recent way of handling Provençal poets is to bring them up to date, to dispense with any adventitious charm, to make them more universal.[9] There are, however, limits to the usefulness of the Provençal as a *persona* for the poet. Mr. Pound wishes to maintain as much as possible of the musical value of the original; to suggest this he is compelled to use a manner which cannot wholly dissolve all the purely historical solids:

Flimsy another's joy, false and distort,
No paregale that she springs not above . . .
Her love-touch by none other mensurate. [13]

Partly for this reason the Provençal is no longer such a perfect vehicle for Mr. Pound as that which he has made of Propertius.

The poems "contemporaneous" are the most doubtful in the book. I am not at all sure that "Mr. Styrax" and "Nodier raconte . . ." are good poems, or that, even with Martial behind it, the modern satirical vein is of permanent importance.[10] The two poems mentioned irritate in a way in which poems should not irritate; they make you conscious of having been written by somebody; they have not written themselves. There are lines in them which are too much the voice of the accidental human being with a smile in conversation. "I Vecchi" and "Ritratto" are vastly better; they are purified of the negative mood, of all the things which Mr. Pound merely dislikes, which intrude elsewhere.

They will come no more,
The old men with beautiful manners.
Il était comme un tout petit garçon
With his blouse full of apples
And sticking out all the way round;
Blagueur! "Con gli occhi onesti e tardi,"
And he said:
"Oh! Abelard," as if the topic
Were much too abstruse for his comprehension . . . [17]

The Cantos of a long poem (unfinished) are tentative.[11] They are full of beauty; they exhibit great skill; their present importance is not, like that of

the Propertius, as achievement, but as showing what the consummation of Mr. Pound's work could be: a final fusion of all his masks, a final concentration of the entire past upon the present. Incomplete, the casual or lazy reader will find in these Cantos only a succession of bright, discrete images, and a collection of obscure literary allusions.

It juts into the sky, Gourdon that is,
Like a thin spire. Blue night pulled down about it
Like tent-flaps or sails close hauled. [25][12]

In "level poplar lands," he found a flower, and wept;
"Y a la primera flor," he wrote,
"Qu'ieu trobei, tornei em plor." [23]

The more discerning will find careful study of the compression of the essential points of a story or situation (as in the marriage of Pedro the Cruel, p. 27); only those who have studied Mr. Pound's method from his other work will find any continuity or meaning.[13]

But as to the Propertius there can be no doubt; it is one of the best things Mr. Pound has done. It is a new *persona*, a creation of a new character, recreating Propertius in himself, and himself in Propertius. It is probably a truer interpretation of that man of letters than Professor Mackail's;[14] but to regard it as a "translation" is to consider its author's work in that piecemeal fashion which is to be deprecated. Parts of one elegy are joined to another, parts are omitted, the order is changed, and the series of twelve is extracted from all of the four books of elegies.[15]

When, when, and whenever death closes our eyelids,
Moving naked over Acheron
Upon the one raft, victor and conquered together,
Marius and Jagurtha together,
one tangle of shadows.
Cæsar plots against India,
Tigris and Euphrates shall from now on flow at his bidding,
Tibet shall be full of Roman policemen,
The Parthians shall get used to our statuary
and acquire a Roman religion. [41]

It is impossible, of course, to employ the words "translation," "original," or "derivative" in dealing with a poem like this. Certainly, there is no other

poet living who could justify such a method; but we believe that Mr. Pound has succeeded.

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. Pound's third and fourth volumes of verse, *Personae* and *Exultations*, were published in 1909 by Elkin Mathews (London); they were preceded by *A Lume Spento* (Venice, 1908) and *A Quinzaine for This Yule* (London, 1908). For TSE's remarks on many of these earlier volumes, see his *Ezra Pound: His Metric and Poetry* (1.626).

2. TSE had similarly defended Pound in Sept 1918, and he repeated his defense shortly thereafter in the *Egoist*: "No one could be farther from the archaeological interest" (1.768).

3. Pound's sixth collection of poems, *Ripostes* (1912; 1913), included his translation of the Anglo-Saxon "The Seafarer"; his version originally appeared in Nov 1911 as the initial installment of "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris," his series in *The New Age*.

4. *friandise*: daintiness.

5. *Cathay: Translations by Ezra Pound for the Most Part from the Chinese of Rihaku, From the Notes of the Late Ernest Fenollosa, and the Decipherings of the Professors Mori and Ariga* (London: Elkin Mathews, 1915). Magic City: a reference to either *The Magic City and Other Fairy Tales* (1903), by Netta Syrett, or *The Magic City* (1910), by Edith Nesbit.

6. First published in 1911 and later reprinted in a joint edition with *Ripostes* in 1913, *Canzoni* featured Pound's imitations of medieval Italian and Provençal poets like Guido Cavalcanti, Bertran de Born, and Arnaut Daniel.

7. *hic et ubique*: here and everywhere. TSE repeats Hamlet's words to Horatio and Marcellus as the ghost once again interrupts their oath: "*Hic et ubique?* Then we'll shift our ground. / Come hither, gentlemen" (I.v.164-65).

8. A selection of the writers whose manner Pound had adopted or imitated in the volumes that TSE has mentioned, including twelfth-century troubadour poets Arnaut Daniel and Bertran de Born; Italian poet and contemporary of Dante, Guido Cavalcanti (ca. 1255-1300); Chinese poet Li Po, and Roman elegiac poet Sextus Propertius (ca. 50 BC-16 BC).

9. Pound studied the troubadour poets and medieval Provençal as a student at Hamilton College from 1903 to 1905. His first work of prose criticism, *The Spirit of Romance: An Attempt to Define Somewhat the Charm of the Pre-Renaissance Literature of Latin Europe* (1910) discussed the troubadours and grew out of a series of lectures that he gave at the London Polytechnic Institute in 1909. In *Ezra Pound: His Metric and Poetry* (1917), TSE observed that Pound was "supersaturated in Provence . . . the life of the courts where the Troubadours thronged was part of his own life to him" (1.629).

10. "Mr. Styrax" and "Nodier raconte . . ." both appear in the section titled "Moeurs contemporaines" – titled after Remy de Gourmont's remark in *Le Problème du style* that an artist should always relate "les mœurs de ses contemporaines" – which first appeared in nine parts in the *Little Review*. The first relates the "ineptitudes" of Mr. Hecatomb Styrax, who has "driven his wife from one religious excess to another"; the second takes its title from the opening lines of Théophile Gautier's ironic, gothic poem "Inès de las Sierras" in *Émaux et Camées*. Pound was influenced in part by the satirical epigrams of Martial, whose presence

TSE remarked briefly upon in both *Ezra Pound: His Metric and Poetry* and "A Note on Ezra Pound" (1.639, 1.752).

11. Though Pound would later claim to have begun working on the single long poem that would occupy him for the remainder of his career, *The Cantos*, in 1904, these three (now known as the *Ur*-Cantos) had appeared first in *Poetry* (June-Aug 1917) and were revised for inclusion in the present volume. They were extensively rewritten and rearranged – with over half of the material excised – before the publication of *A Draft of XVI Cantos* (1925).

12. TSE corrects Pound's "Gordon" to "Gourdon," the proper spelling of a village in the Dordogne region of southwestern France. The two had just returned from their walking tour of the Dordogne in Aug 1919.

13. In Canto II ("O 'Virgilio mio'"), Pound relates the historical narrative of Pedro (1334-69), King of Castile and of Portugal, and his delayed revenge upon his lover's murderers; he had given it thus in *The Spirit of Romance*: "Constança, wife of Pedro, heir to the throne of Portugal, died in 1345. He then married in secret one of her maids of honor, Ignez da Castro . . . Her position was the cause of jealousy, and of conspiracy; she was stabbed . . . When Pedro succeeded to the throne, he had her body exhumed, and the court did homage" (231).

14. Mackail offers his interpretation in the chapter titled "Propertius and the Elegists" in *Latin Literature* (1895). In the introduction to Pound's *Selected Poems* (London: Faber & Gwyer, 1928), TSE suggests that Pound's version "insists upon an element of humour, of irony and mockery . . . which Mackail and other interpreters have missed" (xxiii).

15. The extant corpus of Sextus Propertius comprises four books of "elegies," cycles of poems composed in the elegiac meter (alternating lines of hexameter and pentameter) and emphasizing the poet's relationship to a single beloved.

Our Inaccessible Heritage

To the Editor of *The Athenaeum*

The Athenaeum, 4669 (24 Oct 1919) 1076

Sir, – Your correspondents appear to have exhausted their commentary upon the "Inaccessible Heritage."[1] There is, however, one important branch of the subject which has not, so far as I know, been explored. The heritage does not include only the books we wish to buy and cannot procure; it includes also the books which we do not wish to buy, but wish to read and cannot reach. The question is whether the British Museum Library ought not to be open to readers in the evening, and on Sunday.[2]

At present the Library can only be used by those whose occupation or lack of occupation permits them to pass their days there. The research of the professional scholar, the curiosity of the affluent, the affliction of the dotard, the idleness of the pauper – these may all be gratified or solaced in the Library; it can also provide a degree of physical warmth for the homeless. But for those who are regularly occupied elsewhere for even six hours of the day, the Library is useless; and among this last class, I believe, are many of those who might most profitably make use of it.

For this class there is one resource, if they can afford it: the London Library.[3] The London Library, for a private library, is surprisingly good; its terms are generous and its manners gracious; but if one wishes to pursue any subject very far, it is, naturally, not inexhaustible. Moreover, there is no need for more than one complete repository of printed matter. The Museum might, as a test, be opened for two nights a week until ten o'clock. Some enlargement of staff would be necessary; if the Museum authorities would inform us of the probable cost of this innovation we should know whether such an expansion of the usefulness of the Library is beyond the means of the nation, which endures expenses of far less general benefit.

I am, Sir, your obliged obedient servant,

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. The exchange in the pages of the *Athenauem* began on 11 July 1919, when John Middleton Murry's unsigned leader, "Our Inaccessible Heritage," lamented the "infinite difficulties" that face readers who would procure inexpensive editions of English literary classics, especially editions of Elizabethan writers other than Shakespeare (581). A flurry of responses appeared in the following issues, and Murry printed another front-page essay ("Our Inaccessible Heritage, II") on 5 Sept 1919, in which he emphasized "the frank and salutary statements of the publishers that they would gladly do more reprinting if they could afford to" (837). TSE's contribution came five weeks after the last letter on the topic appeared on 19 Sept.

2. The British Museum Library housed the print collections of the British Museum, founded in 1753 by Act of Parliament. From its inception, the national repository aimed to provide free access to all, though throughout 1919 government offices that had been temporarily installed there during the war continued to obstruct that access. In Mar 1919, the reading room eased war restrictions and extended hours until 6:00 p.m. In Dec 1919, the board of trustees declined requests from the House of Commons to revert to the prewar closing time (7:00 p.m.) and to open on Sundays.

3. The London Library was founded in 1841 by Thomas Carlyle as a private, lending library. In June 1919, the library reported that its annual book circulation had exceeded 100,000 volumes and that the entrance fee had been raised from £1 1s. to £3 3s. TSE became a member in Oct 1918 (see illustration 4). When he became president of the library in July 1952, TSE reflected on how invaluable it had been when he was "employed in a bank in the City, and had little time to spend in libraries": "There was the British Museum: but I had only my Saturday afternoons free. . . . At this juncture, it was the London library that made my literary journalism possible. I could go there at my leisure, after lunch on Saturday, rummage the stacks, and emerge with nine or ten volumes to take home with me. Without the London Library, many of my early essays could never have been written." *A Presidential Address to the Members of the London Library* (London: Queen Anne Press, 1952), [1-2].

Mr. Pound and His Poetry

To the Editor of *The Athenaeum*

The Athenaeum, 4671 (7 Nov 1919) 1163

Sir, – Mr. Pound's letter of last week appears to me quite superfluous.[1] It is perfectly obvious that he must have been indebted to someone, unless he is a Chinese scholar, which nobody supposes; I am perfectly willing to believe that his creditor is the late Mr. Fenollosa; but the gist of my criticism is that Mr. Pound is less indebted to previous translators – Giles and Legge – than subsequent translators are indebted to Mr. Pound.[2]

As for his suspicion that I did not enjoy his Propertius, I did not think the question of public interest: *his non plebecula gaudet*.[3]

I am, Sir, yours, etc.,

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. Commenting on TSE's review (141) of *Quia Pauper Amavi* in a letter to the editor of the *Athenaeum* on 31 Oct 1919, Pound asserted the significance of his debt to Orientalist Ernest Fenollosa (1853-1908), whom TSE had not mentioned, reaffirming Fenollosa's "profound insight into the Chinese written character as a poetic medium. This debt is so great that I would not have it lightly forgotten" (1132). He came into possession of Fenollosa's research archive in Dec 1913 when Mary Fenollosa, in London after her husband's death, asked Pound to edit and publish his work.

2. Sinologists Herbert Allen Giles, Cambridge Professor of Chinese and author of *A History of Chinese Literature* (1901), and James Legge (1815-97), Oxford chair of Chinese and translator of the seven-volume *Chinese Classics* (1861-72). TSE later wrote in the introduction to Pound's *Selected Poems* (1928): "we *think* we are closer to the Chinese than when we read, for instance, Legge. I doubt this" (15).

3. *Trans*: The rabble do not delight in these things. TSE quotes from Ben Jonson's modification of a line from Horace's *Epistles* (II.i.186), which originally read "his nam plebecula gaudet" [the rabble delight in these things]. Jonson appended the line as an epigraph to *Catiline his Conspiracy*, which TSE taught in his 1918 Extension course and which he addresses in the essays on Jonson he was finishing (150). TSE responds in kind to the untranslated and truncated Latin quotation from the *Elegies* of Propertius (III.i.19) with which Pound began his letter – "Mollia, Pegasides, date vestro serta" (Pound himself had loosely translated the line in *Poetry*, Mar 1919: "I ask a wreath which will not crush my head").

Ben Jonson[1]

The reputation of Jonson has been of the most deadly kind that can be compelled upon the memory of a great poet. To be universally accepted; to be damned by the praise that quenches all desire to read the book; to be afflicted by the imputation of the virtues which excite the least pleasure; and to be read only by historians and antiquaries – this is the most perfect conspiracy of approval. For some generations the reputation of Jonson has been carried rather as a liability than as an asset in the balance-sheet of English literature. No critic has succeeded in making him appear pleasurable or even interesting. Swinburne's book on Jonson satisfies no curiosity and stimulates no thought.[2] For the critical study in the "Men of Letters Series" by Mr. Gregory Smith there is a place; it satisfies curiosity, it supplies many just observations, it provides valuable matter on the neglected masques; it only fails to remodel the image of Jonson which is settled in our minds. Probably the fault lies with several generations of our poets. It is not that the value of poetry is only its value to living poets for their own work; but appreciation is akin to creation, and true enjoyment of poetry is related to the stirring of suggestion, the stimulus that a poet feels in his enjoyment of other poetry. Jonson has provided no creative stimulus for a very long time; consequently we must look back as far as Dryden – precisely, a poetic practitioner who learned from Jonson – before we find a living criticism of Jonson's work.[3]

Yet there are possibilities for Jonson even now. We have no difficulty in seeing what brought him to this pass; how, in contrast, not with Shakespeare, but with Marlowe, Webster, Donne, Beaumont and Fletcher, he has been paid out with reputation instead of enjoyment. He is no less a poet than these men, but his poetry is of the surface. Poetry of the surface cannot be understood without study; for to deal with the surface of life, as Jonson dealt with it, is to deal so deliberately that we too must be deliberate, in order to understand. Shakespeare, and smaller men also, are in the end more difficult, but they offer something at the start to encourage the student or to satisfy those who want nothing more; they are suggestive, evocative, a phrase, a voice; they offer poetry in detail as well as in design. So does Dante offer something, a phrase everywhere (*tu se' ombra ed ombra vedi*)

even to readers who have no Italian;[4] and Dante and Shakespeare have poetry of design as well as of detail. But the polished veneer of Jonson only reflects[5†] the lazy reader's fatuity; unconscious does not respond to unconscious; no swarms of inarticulate feelings are aroused. The immediate appeal of Jonson is to the mind; his emotional tone is not in the single verse, but in the design of the whole. But not many people are capable of discovering for themselves the beauty which is only found after labour; and Jonson's industrious readers have been those whose interest was historical and curious, and those who have thought that in discovering the historical and curious interest they had discovered the artistic value as well. When we say that Jonson requires study, we do not mean study of his classical scholarship or of seventeenth-century manners. We mean intelligent saturation in his work as a whole; we mean that in order to enjoy him at all, we must get to the centre of his work and his temperament, and that we must see him unbiased by time, as a contemporary. And to see him as a contemporary does not so much require the power of putting ourselves into seventeenth-century London as it requires the power of setting Jonson in our London.[6†]

It is generally conceded that Jonson failed as a tragic dramatist; and it is usually agreed that he failed because his genius was for satiric comedy and because of the weight of pedantic learning with which he burdened his two tragic failures.[7] The second point marks an obvious error of detail; the first is too crude a statement to be accepted; to say that he failed because his genius was unsuited to tragedy is to tell us nothing at all. Jonson did not write a good tragedy, but we can see no reason why he should not have written one. If two plays so different as *The Tempest* and *The Silent Woman* are both comedies, surely the category of tragedy could be made wide enough to include something possible for Jonson to have done.[8] But the classification of tragedy and comedy, while it may be sufficient to mark the distinction in a dramatic literature of more rigid form and treatment – it may distinguish Aristophanes from Euripides – is not adequate to a drama of such variations as the Elizabethans.[9] Tragedy is a crude classification for plays so different in their tone as *Macbeth*, *The Jew of Malta*, and *The Witch of Edmonton*; and it does not help us much to say that *The Merchant of Venice* and *The Alchemist* are comedies.[10] Jonson had his own scale, his own instrument. The merit which *Catiline* possesses is the same merit that is exhibited more triumphantly in *Volpone*; *Catiline* fails, not because it is too laboured and conscious, but because it is not conscious enough; because

Jonson in this play was not alert to his own idiom, not clear in his mind as to what his temperament wanted him to do. In *Catiline* Jonson conforms, or attempts to conform, to conventions; not to the conventions of antiquity, which he had exquisitely under control, but to the conventions of tragico-historical drama of his time. It is not the Latin erudition that sinks *Catiline*, but the application of that erudition to a form which was not the proper vehicle for the mind which had amassed the erudition.

If you look at *Catiline* – that dreary Pyrrhic victory of tragedy – you find two passages to be successful: Act II. Sc. i, the dialogue of the political ladies, and the Prologue of Sylla's ghost. These two passages are genial. The soliloquy of the ghost is a characteristic Jonson success in content and in versification –

> Dost thou not feel me, Rome? not yet! is night
> So heavy on thee, and my weight so light?
> Can Sylla's ghost arise within thy walls,
> Less threatening than an earthquake, the quick falls
> Of thee and thine? Shake not the frighted heads
> Of thy steep towers, or shrink to their first beds?
> Or as their ruin the large Tyber fills,
> Make that swell up, and drown thy seven proud hills? . . .[11]

This is the learned, but also the creative, Jonson. Without concerning himself with the character of Sulla, and in lines of invective, Jonson makes Sylla's ghost, while the words are spoken, a living and terrible force. The words fall with as determined beat as if they were the will of the morose Dictator himself.[12] You may say: merely invective; but mere invective, even if as superior to the clumsy fisticuffs of Marston and Hall as Jonson's verse is superior to theirs, would not create a living figure as Jonson has done in this long tirade.[13] And you may say: rhetoric; but if we are to call it "rhetoric" we must subject that term to a closer dissection than any to which it is accustomed.[14] What Jonson has done here is not merely a fine speech. It is the careful, precise filling in of a strong and simple outline, and at no point does it overflow the outline; it is far more careful and precise in its obedience to this outline than are many of the speeches in *Tamburlaine*. The outline is not Sulla, for Sulla has nothing to do with it, but "Sylla's ghost." The words may not be suitable to an historical Sulla, or to anybody in history, but they are a perfect expression for "Sylla's ghost." You cannot say they are rhetorical "because people do not talk like that," you cannot call

them "verbiage"; they do not exhibit prolixity or redundancy or the other vices in the rhetoric books; there is a definite artistic emotion which demands expression at that length. The words themselves are mostly simple words, the syntax is natural, the language austere rather than adorned. Turning then to the induction of *The Poetaster*, we find another success of the same kind –

> Light, I salute thee, but with wounded nerves . . .[15]

Men may not talk in that way, but the Spirit of Envy does, and in the words of Jonson Envy is a real and living person. It is not human life that informs Envy and Sylla's ghost, but it is energy of which human life is only another variety.[16†]

Returning to *Catiline*, we find that the best scene in the body of the play is one which cannot be squeezed into a tragic frame, and which appears to belong to satiric comedy. The scene between Fulvia and Galla and Sempronia is a living scene in a wilderness of oratory. And as it recalls other scenes – there is a suggestion of the college of ladies in *The Silent Woman* – it looks like a comedy scene. And it appears to be satire.

> They shall all give and pay well, that come here,
> If they will have it; and that, jewels, pearl,
> Plate, or round sums to buy these. I'm not taken
> With a cob-swan or a high-mounting bull,
> As foolish Leda and Europa were;
> But the bright gold, with Danaë. For such price
> I would endure a rough, harsh Jupiter,
> Or ten such thundering gamesters, and refrain
> To laugh at 'em, till they are gone, with my much suffering.[17]

This scene is no more comedy than it is tragedy, and the "satire" is merely a medium for the essential emotion. Jonson's drama is only incidentally satire, because it is only incidentally a criticism upon the actual world. It is not satire in the way in which the work of Swift[18] or the work of Molière may be called satire: that is, it does not find its source in any precise emotional attitude or precise intellectual criticism of the actual world. It is satire perhaps as the work of Rabelais is satire; certainly not more so. The important thing is that if fiction can be divided into creative fiction and critical fiction, Jonson's is creative. That he was a great critic, our first great critic, does not affect this assertion. Every creator is also a critic; Jonson was a

conscious critic, but he was also conscious in his creations. Certainly, one sense in which the term "critical" may be applied to fiction is a sense in which the term might be used of a method antithetical to Jonson's. It is the method of *Éducation Sentimentale*. The characters of Jonson, of Shakespeare, perhaps of all the greatest drama, are drawn in positive and simple outlines. They may be filled in, and by Shakespeare they are filled in, by much detail or many shifting aspects; but a clear and sharp and simple form remains through these – though it would be hard to say in what the clarity and sharpness and simplicity of Hamlet consists. But Frédéric Moreau is not made in that way.[19] He is constructed partly by negative definition, built up by a great number of observations. We cannot isolate him from the environment in which we find him; it may be an environment which is or can be universalized;[20†] nevertheless it, and the figure in it, consist of very many observed particular facts, the actual world. Without this world the figure dissolves. The ruling faculty is a critical perception, a commentary upon experienced feeling and sensation. If this is true of Flaubert, it is true in a higher degree of Molière than of Jonson. The broad farcical lines of Molière may seem to be the same drawing as Jonson's. But Molière – say in Alceste or Monsieur Jourdain – is criticizing the actual; the reference to the actual world is more direct.[21] And having a more tenuous reference, the work of Jonson is much less directly satirical.

This leads us to the question of Humours.[22] Largely on the evidence of the two Humour plays, it is sometimes assumed that Jonson is occupied with types; typical exaggerations, or exaggerations of type. The Humour definition, the expressed intention of Jonson, may be satisfactory for these two plays.[23†] *Every Man in his Humour* is the first mature work of Jonson, and the student of Jonson must study it; but it is not the play in which Jonson found his genius: it is the last of his plays to read first. If one reads *Volpone*, and after that re-reads the *Jew of Malta*; then returns to Jonson and reads *Bartholomew Fair*, *The Alchemist*, *Epicoene* and *The Devil is an Ass*, and finally *Catiline*, it is possible to arrive at a fair opinion of the poet and the dramatist.

The Humour, even at the beginning, is not a type, as in Marston's satire, but a simplified and somewhat distorted individual with a typical mania. In the later work, the Humour definition quite fails to account for the total effect produced. The characters of Shakespeare are such as might exist in different circumstances than those in which Shakespeare sets them.[24] The latter appear to be those which extract from the characters the most intense

and interesting realization; but that realization has not exhausted their possibilities. Volpone's life, on the other hand, is bounded by the scene in which it is played; in fact, the life is the life of the scene and is derivatively the life of Volpone; the life of the character is inseparable from the life of the drama. This is not dependence upon a background, or upon a substratum of fact. The emotional effect is single and simple. Whereas in Shakespeare the effect is due to the way in which the characters *act upon* one another, in Jonson it is given by the way in which the characters *fit in* with each other. The artistic result of *Volpone* is not due to any effect that Volpone, Mosca, Corvino, Corbaccio, Voltore have upon each other, but simply to their combination into a whole. And these figures are not personifications of passions; separately, they have not even that reality, they are constituents. It is a similar indication of Jonson's method that you can hardly pick out a line of Jonson's and say confidently that it is great poetry; but there are many extended passages to which you cannot deny that honour.

> I will have all my beds blown up, not stuft;
> Down is too hard; and then, mine oval room
> Fill'd with such pictures as Tiberius took
> From Elephantis, and dull Aretine
> But coldly imitated. Then, my glasses
> Cut in more subtle angles, to disperse
> And multiply the figures, as I walk. . . .[25]

Jonson is the legitimate heir of Marlowe. The man who wrote, in *Volpone*:

> for thy love,
> In varying figures, I would have contended
> With the blue Proteus, or the hornèd flood. . . .[26]

and

> See, a carbuncle
> May put out both the eyes of our Saint Mark;
> A diamond would have bought Lollia Paulina,
> When she came in like star-light, hid with jewels. . . .[27]

is related to Marlowe as a poet; and if Marlowe is a poet, Jonson is also. And, if Jonson's comedy is a comedy of humours, then Marlowe's tragedy, a large part of it, is a tragedy of humours. But Jonson has too exclusively

been considered as the typical representative of a point of view toward comedy. He has suffered from his great reputation as a critic and theorist, from the effects of his intelligence. We have been taught to think of him as the man, the dictator (confusedly in our minds with his later namesake), as the literary politician impressing his views upon a generation; we are offended by the constant reminder of his scholarship. We forget the comedy in the humours, and the serious artist in the scholar. Jonson has suffered in public opinion, as anyone must suffer who is forced to talk about his art.[28†]

If you examine the first hundred lines or more of *Volpone* the verse appears to be in the manner of Marlowe, more deliberate, more mature, but without Marlowe's inspiration. It looks like mere "rhetoric," certainly not "deeds and language such as men do use."[29†] It appears to us, in fact, forced and flagitious bombast. That it is not "rhetoric," or at least not vicious rhetoric, we do not know until we are able to review the whole play. For the consistent maintenance of this manner conveys in the end an effect not of verbosity, but of bold, even shocking and terrifying directness. We have difficulty in saying exactly what produces this simple and single effect. It is not in any ordinary way due to management of intrigue. Jonson employs immense dramatic constructive skill: it is not so much skill in plot as skill in doing without a plot. He never manipulates as complicated a plot as that of *The Merchant of Venice*; he has in his best plays nothing like the intrigue of Restoration comedy. In *Bartholomew Fair* it is hardly a plot at all; the marvel of the play is the bewildering rapid chaotic action of the fair; it is the fair itself, not anything that happens in the fair.[30†] In *Volpone*, or *The Alchemist*, or *The Silent Woman*, the plot is enough to keep the players in motion; it is rather an "action" than a plot. The plot does not hold the play together; what holds the play together is a unity of inspiration that radiates into plot and personages alike.

We have attempted to make more precise the sense in which it was said that Jonson's work is "of the surface"; carefully avoiding the word "superficial." For there is work contemporary with Jonson's which is superficial in a pejorative sense in which the word cannot be applied to Jonson – the work of Beaumont and Fletcher. If we look at the work of Jonson's great contemporaries, Shakespeare, and also Donne and Webster and Tourneur (and sometimes Middleton), have a depth, a third dimension, as Mr. Gregory Smith rightly calls it, which Jonson's work has not.[31] Their words have often a network of tentacular roots reaching down to the deepest terrors

and desires. Jonson's most certainly have not; but in Beaumont and Fletcher we may think that at times we find it. Looking closer, we discover that the blossoms of Beaumont and Fletcher's imagination draw no sustenance from the soil, but are cut and slightly withered flowers stuck into sand.[32]

> Wilt thou, hereafter, when they talk of me,
> As thou shalt hear nothing but infamy,
> Remember some of these things? . . .
> I pray thee, do; for thou shalt never see me so again.[33]

> Hair woven in many a curious warp,
> Able in endless error to enfold
> The wandering soul; . . .[34]

Detached from its context, this looks like the verse of the greater poets; just as lines of Jonson, detached from their context, look like inflated or empty fustian. But the evocative quality of the verse of Beaumont and Fletcher depends upon a clever appeal to emotions and associations which they have not themselves grasped; it is hollow. It is superficial with a vacuum behind it; the superficies of Jonson is solid. It is what it is; it does not pretend to be another thing. But it is so very conscious and deliberate that we must look with eyes alert to the whole before we apprehend the significance of any part. We cannot call a man's work superficial when it is the creation of a world; a man cannot be accused of dealing superficially with the world which he himself has created; the superficies *is* the world. Jonson's characters conform to the logic of the emotions of their world.[35†] They are not fancy, because they have a logic of their own; and this logic illuminates the actual world, because it gives us a new point of view from which to inspect it.[36†]

A writer of power and intelligence, Jonson endeavoured to promulgate, as a formula and programme of reform, what he chose to do himself; and he not unnaturally laid down in abstract theory what is in reality a personal point of view. And it is in the end of no value to discuss Jonson's theory and practice unless we recognize and seize this point of view, which escapes the formulae, and which is what makes his plays worth reading. Jonson behaved as the great creative mind that he was: he created his own world, a world from which his followers, as well as the dramatists who were trying to do something wholly different, are excluded. Remembering this, we turn to Mr. Gregory Smith's objection – that Jonson's characters lack the third

dimension, have no life out of the theatrical existence in which they appear – and demand an inquest. The objection implies that the characters are purely the work of intellect, or the result of superficial observation of a world which is faded or mildewed. It implies that the characters are lifeless. But if we dig beneath the theory, beneath the observation, beneath the deliberate drawing and the theatrical and dramatic elaboration, there is discovered a kind of power, animating Volpone, Busy, Fitzdottrel, the literary ladies of *Epicoene*, even Bobadil, which comes from below the intellect, and for which no theory of humours will account.[37] And it is the same kind of power which vivifies Trimalchio, and Panurge, and some but not all of the "comic" characters of Dickens.[38] The fictive life of this kind is not to be circumscribed by a reference to "comedy" or to "farce"; it is not exactly the kind of life which informs the characters of Molière or that which informs those of Marivaux – two writers who were, besides, doing something quite different the one from the other.[39] But it is something which distinguishes Barabas from Shylock, Epicure Mammon from Falstaff, Faustus from – if you will – Macbeth; Marlowe and Jonson from Shakespeare and the Shakespearians, Webster, and Tourneur.[40] It is not merely Humours: for neither Volpone nor Mosca is a humour. No theory of humours could account for Jonson's best plays or the best characters in them. We want to know at what point the comedy of humours passes into a work of art, and why Jonson is not Brome.[41]

The creation of a work of art, we will say the creation of a character in a drama, consists in the process of transfusion of the personality, or, in a deeper sense, the life, of the author into the character. This is a very different matter from the orthodox creation in one's own image. The ways in which the passions and desires of the creator may be satisfied in the work of art are complex and devious. In a painter they may take the form of a predilection for certain colours, tones, or lightings; in a writer the original impulse may be even more strangely transmuted. Now, we may say with Mr. Gregory Smith that Falstaff or a score of Shakespeare's characters have a "third dimension" that Jonson's have not. This will mean, not that Shakespeare's spring from the feelings or imagination and Jonson's from the intellect or invention; they have equally an emotional source; but that Shakespeare's represent a more complex tissue of feelings and desires, as well as a more supple, a more susceptible temperament. Falstaff is not only the roast Manningtree ox with the pudding in his belly;[42†] he also "grows old," and, finally, his nose is as sharp as a pen.[43] He was perhaps the

satisfaction of more, and of more complicated feelings; and perhaps he was, as the great tragic characters must have been, the offspring of deeper, less apprehensible feelings: deeper, but not necessarily stronger or more intense, than those of Jonson. It is obvious that the spring of the difference is not the difference between feeling and thought, or superior insight, superior perception, on the part of Shakespeare, but his susceptibility to a greater range of emotion, and emotion deeper and more obscure. But his characters are no more "alive" than are the characters of Jonson.

The world they live in is a larger one. But small worlds – the worlds which artists create – do not differ only in magnitude; if they are complete worlds, drawn to scale in every part, they differ in kind also. And Jonson's world has this scale. His type of personality found its relief in something falling under the category of burlesque or farce – though when you are dealing with a *unique* world, like his, these terms fail to appease the desire for definition. It is not, at all events, the farce of Molière: the latter is more analytic, more an intellectual redistribution. It is not defined by the word "satire." Jonson poses as a satirist. But satire like Jonson's is great in the end not by hitting off its object, but by creating it; the satire is merely the means which leads to the aesthetic result, the impulse which projects a new world into a new orbit. In *Every Man in his Humour* there is a neat, a very neat, comedy of humours. In discovering and proclaiming in this play the new genre Jonson was simply recognizing, unconsciously, the route which opened out in the proper direction for his instincts. His characters are and remain, like Marlowe's, simplified characters; but the simplification does not consist in the dominance of a particular humour or monomania. That is a very superficial account of it. The simplification consists largely in reduction of detail, in the seizing of aspects relevant to the relief of an emotional impulse which remains the same for that character, in making the character conform to a particular setting. This stripping is essential to the art, to which is also essential a flat distortion in the drawing; it is an art of caricature, of great caricature, like Marlowe's. It is a great caricature, which is beautiful; and a great humour, which is serious. The "world" of Jonson is sufficiently large; it is a world of poetic imagination; it is sombre. He did not get the third dimension, but he was not trying to get it.

If we approach Jonson with less frozen awe of his learning, with a clearer understanding of his "rhetoric" and its applications, if we grasp the fact that the knowledge required of the reader is not archaeology but knowledge of Jonson, we can derive not only instruction in two-dimensional life

– but enjoyment.[44†] We can even apply him, be aware of him as a part of our literary inheritance craving further expression. Of all the dramatists of his time, Jonson is probably the one whom the present age would find the most sympathetic, if it knew him. There is a brutality, a lack of sentiment, a polished surface, a handling of large bold designs in brilliant colours, which ought to attract about three thousand people in London and elsewhere. At least, if we had a contemporary Shakespeare and a contemporary Jonson, it might be the Jonson who would arouse the enthusiasm of the intelligentsia.[45†] Though he is saturated in literature, he never sacrifices the theatrical qualities – theatrical in the most favourable sense – to literature or to the study of character. His work is a titanic show. Jonson's masques, an important part of his work, are neglected;[46†] our flaccid culture lets shows and literature fade, but prefers faded literature to faded shows. There are hundreds of people who have read *Comus* to ten who have read the *Masque of Blackness*.[47] *Comus* contains fine poetry, and poetry exemplifying some merits to which Jonson's masque poetry cannot pretend. Nevertheless, *Comus* is the death of the masque; it is the transition of a form of art – even of a form which existed for but a short generation – into "literature," literature cast in a form which has lost its application. Even though *Comus* was a masque at Ludlow Castle, Jonson had, what Milton came perhaps too late to have, a sense for the living art; his art was applied.[48†] The masques can still be read, and with pleasure, by anyone who will take the trouble – a trouble which in this part of Jonson is, indeed, a study of antiquities – to imagine them in action, displayed with the music, costume, dances, and the scenery of Inigo Jones.[49] They are additional evidence that Jonson had a fine sense of form, of the purpose for which a particular form is intended; evidence that he was a literary artist even more than he was a man of letters.

NOTES

1. As printed in *SE*; originally two separate contemporaneous reviews, which were combined and revised in *SW*: the revision in *SW* followed the text of "Ben Jonson," *TLS*, 930 (13 Nov 1919), 637-38, incorporating excerpts from "The Comedy of Humours," *The Athenaeum*, 4672 (14 Nov 1919), 1180-81. Both were reviews of *Ben Jonson* by G. Gregory Smith (London: Macmillan, 1919), pp. vi+ 310, and *Ben Jonson's Every Man in his Humour*, ed. Percy Simpson (Oxford: Clarendon, 1919), pp. lxiv+ 175.

"Ben Jonson" was the first of TSE's contributions to the *TLS*. In a letter of 23 Sept 1919, Richard Aldington informed him that *TLS* editor Bruce Richmond professed "a great admiration for your critical prose" but was concerned "that you would consider the *Times* too

old-fashioned" and that "you were rather the property of the *Athenaeum*. I told him that I thought he was wrong in both . . . I also told him that you were a student of Elizabethan literature." *Richard Aldington: An Autobiography in Letters*, 51. TSE met with Richmond at the *Times* offices on 29 Sept; he then wrote to his mother on 2 Oct: "I have been asked to write for the *Times Literary Supplement* – to write the Leading article from time to time. This is the highest honour possible in the critical world of literature, and we are pleased" (*L1* 404). He had begun the review by 5 Nov and had "just finished" five days later (*L1* 416). By editorial policy, all *TLS* reviews were unsigned.

2. TSE recommended Swinburne's *A Study of Ben Jonson* (1889) as "interesting, though misleading" in his 1918 Extension course (1.758).

3. In *Of Dramatick Poesie: An Essay* (1668), Dryden praises Jonson as "the greatest man of the last age" and "the most learned and judicious writer which any theatre ever had."

4. *Purgatorio* XXI.131-2. *Trans*: "Brother, do not so, for thou art a shade, and a shade thou seest" (*DC2* 266-67). Virgil gently rebuffs the shade of Statius, who has just recognized and attempted to embrace him; TSE appended Statius's response, immediately following these lines, as the epigraph to *Ara Vos Prec* (1920) and, in *Poems 1909-1925*, as the epigraph to the section reprinting *Prufrock and Other Observations*.

5†. In *TLS* and *SW*: "reflects only"

6†. In *TLS* and *SW*: "in our London: a more difficult triumph of divination"

7. In the book under review, Smith suggests that "Jonson's great learning served him both well and ill, but more often ill" and that his intellect, "debauched by scholarship, runs too libertine a course"; the "framework of his tragedies," Smith concludes, "is like to buckle under the load" (195). TSE likely also refers to Swinburne's *A Study of Ben Jonson*, which makes similarly critical claims about both of Jonson's tragedies, *Sejanus his Fall* (1605) and *Catiline his Conspiracy* (1611). TSE himself had discussed Jonson's erudition and both *Sejanus* and *Catiline*, particularly "their inferiority to his comedies," in his 1918 Extension course (1.757).

8. Jonson's *Epicoene; or, The Silent Woman* (1620).

9. Greek comic playwright Aristophanes (ca. 450 BC-ca. 338 BC)

10. *The Witch of Edmonton* (1658), by Thomas Dekker, John Ford, and William Rowley; Jonson's *The Alchemist* (1612).

11. *Catiline* I.i.1-8; TSE likely used the Everyman edition (2 vols, 1910), *The Complete Plays of Ben Jonson*, which he recommended to students in his 1918 Extension course (1.758).

12. The historical model for Sylla's ghost was Lucius Cornelius Sulla (ca. 138-78 BC), a vindictive Roman general who was appointed dictator after waging civil war and seizing Rome in 82 BC. The model for Jonson's protagonist, Lucius Sergius Catilina (108-62 BC), supported Sulla's war and later followed his example in conspiring to start a rebellion against the republic.

13. Bishop Joseph Hall (1574-1656)

14. TSE responds in part to Smith's contentions that "Jonson is carried away by his ingenuity and rhetoric, mistaking these for the tragic 'dignity' and 'gravity' and 'fulness' at which he aims. This overflowing is more tolerable in his comedies" (195-96).

15. The first lines of *The Poetaster; or, his Arraignment* (1602).

16†. In *TLS* and *SW*, without capitals: "spirit of envy . . . of Jonson envy . . . informs envy"

17. *Catiline* II.i.177-85.

18. Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), satirist and dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin.

19. Frédéric Moreau, the protagonist of Gustave Flaubert's *L'Éducation sentimentale*.

20†. In *TLS* and *SW*: "can be much universalized"

21. Alceste, the protagonist of Molière's *Le Misanthrope*, detests the social milieu of seventeenth-century Paris yet falls in love with Célimène, a young widow of high social status; Monsieur Jourdain, the title character of Molière's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, is a wealthy, older tradesman whose desire to be a gentleman and whose high regard for Dorimène, a widow and marchioness, lead him to foolish spending and buffoonery. TSE recently discussed the latter in "Marivaux" (3).

22. Jonson offers his own definition of the theory of "humours" – originally a medieval psychological doctrine that held human temperament to be the result of the four elements or "humours" combining in the body – in the induction to *Every Man Out of his Humour* (1600), in which he promises "to give these ignorant well-spoken days / Some taste of their abuse of this word humour" (ll. 79-80) and then explains: "when some one peculiar quality / Doth so possess a man, that it doth draw / All his affects, his spirits, and his powers . . . to run one way, / This may be truly said to be a humour" (ll. 105-09). Simpson discusses Jonson's contribution to the flourishing of "humour books" in the introduction to *Ben Jonson's Every Man in his Humour*; Smith suggests the disadvantages of Jonson's lifelong commitment to the theory of humours in chapter four of *Ben Jonson*.

23†. In TLS: "two plays. But although we are very glad to have at last a scholarly edition of *Every Man in his Humour*, this play is only the beginning of Jonson's good work, and his work reached a much higher development. The Humour, even at"; deleted in *SW* and replaced with the passage as it presently appears: "Every Man in his Humour is the first . . . the poet and the dramatist," which is an excerpt from the second paragraph in *Ath*.

24. TSE echoes Smith: "When we compare Jonson with Shakespeare we must ask ourselves why so few, if any, of his characters are self-sustained, that is, can exist or do exist apart from their setting and are individual and lively to-day as so many of Shakespeare's people are" (87-88).

25. *The Alchemist* II.ii.41-47.

26. *Volpone; or, The Fox* III.vii.151-53.

27. *Volpone; or, The Fox* III.vii.192-95.

28†. In *SW*, TSE inserted the preceding paragraph ("Jonson is the legitimate . . . to talk about his art."), which was originally the first paragraph of *Ath*.

29†. In *TLS* and *SW*: "'men do use'!"

From the prologue to *Every Man in his Humour*, wherein Jonson argues that plays should feature only "deeds, and language, such as men do use, / And persons, such as comedy would choose, / When she would shew an image of the times" (ll. 21-23).

30†. In *TLS* and *SW*: "anything that happens to take place in the fair"

31. Smith suggests that Shakespeare's "greater characters" possess "a double personality, the one as the stage shows it, the other as we feel it to be fundamentally. The second is of course adumbrated in the theatrical personage, otherwise we could not understand it in its fuller and deeper sense. This fuller sympathy is not the immediate effect of the words or the action, but is subtly conveyed by the dramatist's art. . . . It is certainly not possessed by Jonson" (90).

32. TSE may allude to Richard Flecknoe's "A Short Discourse of the English Stage," published with his play *Love's Kingdom* (1664): "*Shakespear* was one of the first who inverted

the Dramatick Stile from dull History to quick Comedy, upon whom *Johnson* refin'd; as *Beaumont* and *Fletcher* first writ in the Heroick way, upon whom Suckling and others endeavoured to refine agen; one saying wittily of his Aglaura that 'twas full of fine flowers, but they seem'd rather stuck then growing there." Richard Levin identifies the allusion in *ANQ*, 8 (Fall 1995): 34-35.

33. Beaumont and Fletcher, *A King and No King* III.i.355-59.

34. Fletcher, *The Faithful Shepherdess* II.ii.125-27; *read*: "Your hair woven into"

35†. In *TLS* and *SW*: "of their world. It is a world like Lobatchevsky's; the worlds created by artists like Jonson are like systems of non-Euclidean geometry. They are not fancy"; Nikolai Ivanovich Lobachevsky (1792-1856) was a Russian mathematician renowned for his discovery – made independently from simultaneous researchers and announced in 1826 – that consistent systems of geometry could be founded based on postulates other than those of Euclid.

36†. In *SW*, TSE inserted the following three paragraphs excerpted from *Ath*.

37. TSE's list of Jonson's memorable comic personages includes Rabbi Zeal-of-the-Land Busy from *Bartholomew Fair*; Fitzdottrel from *The Devil Is an Ass*; the "literary ladies" or collegiates, Lady Haughty, Lady Centaure, and Mistress Dol Mavis, from *Epicoene; or, The Silent Woman*; and Bobadil from *Every Man in his Humour*.

38. Trimalchio is an ostentatious freedman in Petronius's *Satyricon* (ca. 65 AD); Panurge, a spirited rogue and companion to the giant, Pantagruel, in Rabelais's five-volume satire, *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (1532-64).

39. TSE remarked upon the difference between the humor of Molière's farce and the bite of Marivaux's social comedy in "Marivaux" (3).

40. TSE contrasts central characters in the works of Marlowe and Jonson – Barabas and Faustus in Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* and *Doctor Faustus*, Epicure Mammon in Jonson's *The Alchemist* – with those of Shakespeare's plays.

41. Richard Brome, a disciple of Jonson and "Son of Ben," carried on his teacher's theories of comedy and the humours in his earliest extant play, *The City Wit* (1629; pub. 1653), which he claims to have written under "the seal of Ben," and in others like *The Sparagus Garden* (1640) and *The English Moor* (1659).

42†. In *Ath* and *SW*: "Malmesbury ox"

43. In *1 Henry IV*, Hal calls Falstaff "that roasted Manningtree ox with the pudding in his belly" (II.iv.452-53); Falstaff proclaims, "There lives not three good men unhang'd in England, and one of them is fat and grows old" (II.iv.130-32); and Hostess Quickly recalls that "his nose was as sharp as a pen" in *Henry V* (II.iii.16).

44†. In *TLS* and *SW*: "not only instruction in non-Euclidean humanity – but enjoyment."

45†. In *TLS* and *SW*: "it would be the Jonson . . . of the intelligentsia!"

46†. In *TLS* and *SW*: "But Jonson's masques"

47. The first masque to be produced for the queen, Anne of Denmark, and the first of several that Jonson composed in her honor, it was performed on 6 Jan 1605 and published with its sequel, *The Masque of Beauty*, in 1608.

48†. In *TLS* and *SW*: "sense for living art"

Milton's *Comus: A Maske Presented at Ludlow Castle* was performed on 29 Sept 1634 in the Great Hall of the remote Ludlow Castle, in Shropshire, England.

49. Architect and theatre designer Inigo Jones (1573-1652) found his first court employment as the designer of sets and costumes for Jonson's *Masque of Blackness* in 1605.

TEXTUAL NOTES

1. The following passage from the second paragraph in *Ath* was not incorporated into *SW*:

> Consequently, in commending the edition of Mr. Simpson – one of the greatest of authorities upon his author – we must express some regret that *Every Man in his Humour* should be the best known of Jonson's plays. There appears to be some accepted belief that you can get the essentials of Jonson from this play: all that you need, perhaps, for culture.

Scholar and lecturer Percy Simpson (1865-1962) co-edited, with C. H. Herford and others, an eleven-volume edition of Jonson's complete works from 1902 to 1952.

2. The third paragraph in *Ath* was not included in *SW*:

> In commending the work of Mr. Gregory Smith, also, there is something to be deplored. In general, there is to be regretted a dampening lack of enthusiasm; one would hardly suspect, from the critic's usual tone, that Jonson is to be read for any reason beyond historical curiosity. Of *Bartholomew Fair* we hear that
>
> Nowadays we incline to commend the play only as an antiquarian document of unusual interest. . . . it held the stage in Jonson's generation. . . . We take it as we would take Vanity Fair itself, as a miscellany of entertaining rogues and strange toys for afternoon pastime. [117-18]
>
> This is certainly the antithesis of the Swinburnian method of criticism. But on reading that "not a single character in *Volpone* is real," we incline to the opinion that the theory of humours has obscured from Mr. Gregory Smith the whole nature of Jonson's art. Both he and Mr. Simpson have a good deal to say about the humours; what Mr. Simpson has to offer is historical data, for which we should be grateful; but Mr. Smith affects to criticize Jonson upon that ground. His strictures, so far as they go, and from his point of view, are just, as well as traditional: he says that the characters tend to become "too simple" [87]; that they cannot develop or change; that they have no existence apart from their setting; that Jonson makes them explain themselves by posing them in different positions; that they lack depth; that Jonson worked from the outside; and that no one has ever been able to do any good with Jonson's method except Jonson himself.

TSE alters the quotation from Smith, which reads, "Not a single character in it is real" (110).

The Preacher as Artist[1]

A review of *Donne's Sermons: Selected Passages*

ed. Logan Pearsall Smith

Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1919. Pp. lii + 263.

The Athenaeum, 4674 (28 Nov 1919) 1252-53

The selection is well made, and should also convince the reader that it was worth making. To what Mr. Pearsall Smith has said there are no objections to be raised; there are only one or two critical codicils to be added.

Donne's prose is worth reading both because it is a significant moment in the history of English prose, and because it has at its best uncommon dignity and beauty – a style which gives at times what is always uncommon in the sermon, a direct personal communication. Mr. Pearsall Smith is quite aware of Donne's personality, and of the occasions on which it appears immediately in his prose with the same immediacy as in his verse.[2] But we cannot appreciate the significance, the solitariness, of this personal expression in Donne's sermons unless we compare him with one or two of the great preachers of his time, the great preachers whose sermons were fine prose. The absence of such comparison is the single important defect of Mr. Pearsall Smith's introduction. Without it, we are not in a position to criticize Donne's style at all analytically; the comparative study would educe what is doubtless well known to Mr. Pearsall Smith, but not patent to the cultured reader: that a great deal in Donne's predicatory style is traditional, and that some of the most praised passages are produced by a method which is more than traditional, which is immemorial, almost imposed by the sermon form. Not until we see this can we understand the difference between certain passages: the difference between Donne as an artist doing the traditional better than any one else had done it, and Donne putting into the sermon here and there what no one else had put into it.

Merely the fact that these are extracts, that you can extract from the sermons of Donne, is indicative. It is possible to select sermons of Bishop Latimer or Bishop Andrewes, but it would probably be futile to attempt to select passages out of the sermons.[3] From one point of view, it is a disadvantage to Donne that it is possible to make excerpts from his sermons. The

excerpts are enough to show Donne's place in English prose; but the sermon is a form of prose, the form in which Donne's prose was written. It follows that we cannot wholly apprehend Donne's prose without seeing the structure. For the Sermon was a form of literary art – "applied" art as the drama of Donne's day was applied art, applied poetry. And on the other hand, Donne had more in him than could be squeezed into the frame of this form: something which, if it does not crack the frame, at least gives it, now and then, a perceptible outward bulge. We must know what the sermon was, to know what Donne accomplished; and finally, to know what it was in Donne to which the sermon did not give free play. And perhaps this knowledge will supply a clue as to why the sermon is a difficult, perhaps the most difficult form of art; why compositions which were superlatively fine sermons possess none of the permanent qualities of the true work of art; and why Donne, who might have made a great prose art, failed to do so.

Hugh Latimer was a fine writer, and Lancelot Andrewes was a writer of genius. They both had gifts of style; in the style of Andrewes there are points which might very profitably be studied by any prose writer. They both wrote sermons which have beauty, though not the greatness of works of art; the gift of each of them was a gift for the sermon; they had nothing to say which could not be put into a very good sermon, no feelings which the sermon could not satisfy. And many of the passages of Donne given by Mr. Pearsall Smith can be paralleled from Latimer or Andrewes; paralleled in such a way as to leave it open to us to think Donne better, but better only in the same kind. There are touches of poetry in Donne and in Andrewes. The following of Donne is pleasing:

> If you be, when you are, remember that as in that good Custome in these Cities, you hear cheerful street musick in the winter mornings, but yet there was a sad and doleful bel-man, that wak'd you, and call'd upon you two or three hours before that musick came. . . [20]

And also Andrewes:

> Our fashion is to see and see again before we stir a foot, specially if it be to the worship of Christ. Come such a journey at such a time? No; but fairly have put it off to the spring of the year, till the days longer, and the ways fairer, and the weather warmer, till better travelling to Christ.[4]

The odd syntax, the forceful phrase, must have been as effective spoken as they are read. This is positively Andrewes, as much as the other is positively Donne, and both are perfectly suited to the needs of the sermon.

But the selection No. 44 in Mr. Pearsall Smith's book, the famous "Mundus Mare," will illustrate, better than any other, Donne's execution of a usual sermon method.[5] The method is a vivid figure of speech, an image developed at length with point by point reference to spiritual truth. The world is a sea, has ebbs and flows, storms and tempests, the greater fish devour the less; it is like the sea, no place of habitation, but a passage to our habitations. We fish in this sea for the souls of men; we fish with the Gospel of Christ Jesus. The net has leads, the denouncing of God's judgments, and corks, the power of absolution. It is easy to see the value of such analogy for the sermon. The sermon is not oratory: it aims not so much to persuade as to give a fresh emotional tone to what is accepted. Donne does this in a more masterly way than Latimer, but by the same method even in detail. The effect is obtained not only by the analogy, but by repetition of phrase like wave upon wave:

> The world is a Sea in many respects and assimilations. It is a Sea, as it is subject to stormes, and tempests. . . . So the world is a Sea. It is a Sea, as it is bottomlesse to any line. . . . So the world is a Sea. . . . All these wayes the world is a Sea, but especially it is a Sea in this respect, that the Sea is no place of habitation, but a passage to our habitations. [73]

Compare Latimer in his "Sermon on the Card":

> Now turn up your trump, your heart (hearts is trump, as I said before), and cast your trump, your heart, on this card; and upon this card you shall learn what Christ requireth of a christian man . . .[6]

The method – the analogy, and the repetition – is the same as that once used by a greater master of the sermon than either Donne or Andrewes or Latimer: it is the method of the Fire-Sermon preached by the Buddha.[7]

As a writer of sermons, Donne is superior to Latimer, and more mature in style, if not more original or more important, than Andrewes. His style is nearer to Taylor or Browne than to either of these.[8] He might be a little higher than any of these men, but in the same circle. But there are other passages, such as Mr. Pearsall Smith has done well to put first, which carry him out of it:

> I am not all here, I am here now preaching upon this text, and I am at home in my Library considering whether S. Gregory, or S. Hierome, have said best of this text, before. I am here speaking to you, and yet I consider by the way, in the same instant, what it is likely you will say to one another, when I have done, you are not all here neither; you are here now, hearing me, and yet you are thinking that you have heard a better Sermon somewhere else, of this text before . . . you are here, and you remember your selves that now yee think of it: This had been the fittest time, now, when every body else is at Church, to have made such and such a private visit; and because you would be there, you are there. [3-4]

Things like this break, now and again, through the close convention of Elizabethan-Jacobean speech; they are rarer in the prose than in the verse. You will find as gorgeous or as marmoreal prose as Donne could write, in Andrewes or in Hooker:[9] as terse and as direct, here and there in Hakluyt or in Ralegh; but very seldom, in the prose of Donne's age, but seldom, as in this passage, the sense of the artist as an Eye curiously, patiently watching himself as a man. "There is the Ego, the particular, the individuall, I" [2]. Donne was an Egoist, but not an egoist of the religious, the mystical type. Perhaps he was something less important. At all events he was something else; and it was an Ego which nowhere in his works finds complete expression, and only furtively in his sermons. "Amorous soule, ambitious soule, covetous soule, voluptuous soule, what wouldest thou have in heaven?" [2] We should like to know that, but Donne cannot tell us. The difficulty is not to be laid solely to the charge of discerning, critical James I, who plucked Donne from the world and pushed him into a pulpit. We feel that English prose was not sufficiently developed, or developed in the right direction, for this introspective faculty of Donne to tell its tale. Montaigne was all right, but Donne did not find what he wanted; yet he had one of the finest brains of his time, perhaps the finest for its possible purpose. He does not fit: he is no Buddha, but certainly not an Andrewes either. But it would be a great injustice to him, and indeed to his editor as well, to regard him merely as the author of a considerable number of purple paragraphs.

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. Composed before 18 Nov (*L1* 417). Logan Pearsall Smith (1865-1946) was an essayist and editor of anthologies and compilations such as *A Treasury of English Prose* (1919) and *English Idioms* (1923). In the midst of planning a series of English theological collections with Faber,

TSE wrote to A. S. Duncan-Jones on 15 June 1928 expressing his desire to include entire sermons rather than "selections *from* sermons, like Pearsall Smith's useless Oxford text of Donne" (*L4* 183).

2. Smith emphasizes Donne's "personal accent and speaking voice" and calls him "worthy of fame as a prose writer," concluding: "indeed, his mastery of the means of expression was perhaps even greater in prose than in poetry" (xxii-xxiii).

3. Hugh Latimer (ca. 1485- 555) was the Bishop of Worcester; TSE owned the Everyman selected edition (London: Dent, 1906) of his *Sermons* (1844).

4. From Andrewes's sermon, "Of the Nativity" (Christmas Day, 1622). In his copy of *Seventeen Sermons on the Nativity* (London: Griffith, Farran, Okeden & Welsh, 1887), TSE has dog-eared the page that contains both this passage and, immediately before, the passage beginning "A cold coming they had of it at this time of the year" (253), which he later adapted in "Journey of the Magi" (1927).

5. The "World Is a Sea" section appears in the second of a two-part sermon on Matthew 4.18-20 – numbered LXXII in *LXXX Sermons* (1640) – that Donne preached on 19 Dec 1619.

6. From the first of Latimer's two "Sermons on the Card," delivered in Dec 1529 at St. Edward's Church in Cambridge. *Sermons* (London: Dent, 1906), 10.

7. TSE likely studied the "Fire Sermon" and the early Buddhist text in which it appears, the *Mahā-vagga*, in one of the two courses on Indic Philology that he took with Charles Rockwell Lanman at Harvard in 1912-13. In his notes to *The Waste Land*, he suggests that it "corresponds in importance to the Sermon on the Mount" (*CPP* 53), and he recommends *Buddhism in Translations* (1896) by Henry Clarke Warren, who translates the opening passage thus: "All things, O priests, are on fire. . . . The eye, O priests, is on fire; forms are on fire; eye-consciousness is on fire; impressions received by the eye are on fire."

8. English Bishop and theologian Jeremy Taylor (ca. 1613-67)

9. Anglican theologian and priest Richard Hooker (1554-1600), author of *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1594)

The Duchess of Malfi at the Lyric: and Poetic Drama[1]

Art & Letters, 3 (Winter 1920) 36-39

It was a triumph, several weeks ago, for Mr. William Archer, Sir Leo Chiozza Money, and that majority of the British public which sincerely hates the whole of the English literature antecedent to Cowper's *Task*.[2] It was a triumph of considerable magnitude. Years of patient labour have so purified, transmogrified, and debased Shakespeare that several of his plays can be produced before audiences of the most civilized householders and shareholders in the world. And, of course, everyone knows that Shakespeare is not responsible for *Pericles*. He is dull, of course, but it is an interesting and useful exercise for our great actors and actresses to see what they can make of a few of his roles. But Webster remained unacceptable. And now some of our very best cultured Shakespearian actors had devoted most of their spare time for some weeks to getting up *The Duchess of Malfi*; it was staged with almost Shakespearian scenery and a real traverse; scholarly people had collaborated; intelligentsia attended.[3] Yet the result was not only dull: it was ridiculous. Such was the nature of the triumph of Mr. Archer and the modern stage.

A few people, however, will read the result in quite a different sense; will recognize that if it was not a triumph for Webster, it was on the other hand a most damning indictment of the modern stage. In the first place, anyone who has read a great number of plays, ancient and modern, becomes acutely aware of the difference between an acting play and what the nineteenth century produced as "closet drama." Acting plays may be good, or defective, or hopelessly dull; but their dulness has a wholly different tone from the dulness of the closet drama. The dullest, the most theatrically inept, of acting plays will be readable if it only has a few good lines, but the closet drama is wholly unreadable. Between the lines, even the second best lines, of *The Duchess of Malfi* and the best lines of a play by Tennyson or Browning or Swinburne there is an absolute difference. The former were meant to be spoken, the latter were not; they only pretend to mean to be spoken. The significance of the best poetry in *The Duchess of Malfi* is that it is dramatic poetry; and the significance of the performance which we witnessed under the auspices of the Phoenix Society is that precisely in dealing with the

finest poetry the actors were patently most ill at ease. The dressing-room scene, in which Antonio and Cariola withdraw and Ferdinand enters unperceived, is not only a scene of fine poetry, but a scene for the stage. Miss Nesbitt is evidently a conscientious and dignified actress, and I doubt whether there is any very successful living actress who would have played the part better.[4] But there was never a moment when she was the Duchess: she was, at every moment, Miss Catherine Nesbitt "making" a part. And when she came to the lines

> . . . . does not my hair 'gin to change?
> When I grow old, I shall have all the court
> Powder their hair with arras, to be like me.[5]

she continued to make the part, and ruined the lines. We required only that she should transmit the lines, but to transmit lines is beyond the self-control of a modern actor, and so she did what the modern actor does: she "interpreted" them. She had to throw in a little titter, a feminine gesture or two, a hint of archness, and she became, not the Duchess, but somelike the respondent in a drama of divorce. The scene was demolished; the dominant atmosphere in which the author wraps it was dissipated.

There are other clues which fall into place. A scene of minor intensity, not merely less poetic intensity but less *dramatic* intensity, was far better played. (I am inclined to believe that any poetic intensity, in a play, will be dramatic intensity as well, but that is for later consideration). The first scene between the Cardinal and his mistress was well done.[6] It was perhaps too well done in its way. We were again reminded of respondents and co-respondents. It was well done, by two quite competent and quite professional actors, because it is a place in the play where the dominant tone is relaxed. It was simply the scene which most closely resembled a modern social comedy, and the actors were on more familiar and easy ground. But it is not really a more dramatic scene.

Another clue is this. It was self-evident that the scene of the severed hand and the torture of the Duchess are extraordinarily fine on the stage.[7] There were details which might have been improved. But on the whole the staging was good, probably better than that of three hundred years ago. And here, one felt, the actors were held in check by violent situations which nothing in their previous repertory could teach them to distort. Here the play itself got through, magnificently, unique. And the "tragedy of blood" was vindicated. I mean that the horrors were vindicated; and as for the

general assassination – that is merely a convention (as much a convention as the Nuntius or the Confidente).[8] It is a convention which even a modern audience could be brought to accept, if the modern actor understood that a violent death need not invariably be represented as an important event. The only deaths which are essential to the tragedy are those of the Duchess and Cariola; the rest are a form of Exit. They no more indicate an appetite for blood than the Nuntius and the Confidente indicate a strong interest in the servant class.

Applying these various suggestions aroused by the performance at the Lyric, we do not conclude that *The Duchess of Malfi* is a bad or a dull play. But we do not conclude either, that any service has been done to *Art* by such a performance. We want the enjoyment of spoken poetry across the stage, the design of a scene, of costume, of movement, and the excitement of something very fine taking place before a number of people. No modern poet is capable of writing it, and there is not the smallest likelihood that the modern actor, with his interpretative gifts, would allow the poetry to reach the audience even if a poet wrote it and a producer accepted it. For Shakespeare does not survive because he wrote better verse than Webster; good verse is not common enough for us to neglect Webster's. He does not survive because he is more dramatic – but because his drama is better constructed. But what survives is a few mutilated good stage plays, out of a large number; actors "making" parts – Mr. A.'s "Hamlet," B.'s "Shylock," C.'s "Richard III" – the poetry tolerated because overlooked.

The point is not simply that *The Duchess of Malfi* and a few others are great plays and that we never see them and that modern drama is beneath contempt and that something ought to be done about it. The point is not that *Othello* and *Rosmersholm* and *L'annonce faite à Marie* and *Three Wise Fools* and *Daddies* are all plays and that we ought to like *Othello* best.[9] The stage can be used for a considerable variety of purposes: in a modern society, in a large city, it is futile to think of narrowing it to a single convention. It is impossible to expect one kind of actor to be able to perform properly in any of the considerable variety of stage plays, performances or spectacles which could be produced. A performance of *The Duchess of Malfi*, by the Phoenix, is bad archaeology.

I do not mean merely that the modern actor cannot succeed in an old play, but that he cannot succeed in any play which is literary art. The

ordinary modern play is made for the actor. Accordingly, as I said before, we have seen every Hamlet but Shakespeare's. As *Hamlet* is performed, only the plot is Shakespeare's; and the words might as well be the flattest prose. For poetry is something which the actor cannot improve or "interpret"; there is no such thing as the interpretation of poetry; poetry can only be transmitted; in consequence, the ideal actor for a poetic drama is the actor *with no personal vanity*. I do not accuse the recent performers at the Lyric: but the training that any contemporary actor has received is apt to make him devote more attention to himself than to such a person as John Webster.

On the other hand, we cannot expect the luxury of a special breed of actors to be trained exclusively for the performance of plays three hundred years old. Why does the revival of Seventeenth Century Drama suggest virtue, vegetarianism, and a headache, while a performance of *Don Giovanni* – not at the Hoftheater, but in London, on a foggy muddy night – may be entirely a pleasure?[10] Because Opera has gone on without interruption. Perhaps we have never done better than Mozart and never will, but it is the same art that we try to practise. But poetry on the stage is Dead, has been dead two hundred years. The nearest we have got to it, of recent years, is *The Dynasts*, which was not only, in parts, very fine, but was, in parts, finely staged.[11] But it was a little heavy; at the end one felt rather virtuous and tired. Hardy had however the right instinct that to get a poetic vision on to the stage was more important than neat blank verse. The problem for anyone who wants to write a verse play would not be to split up his lines into appropriate speeches, or even to concern himself overmuch about entrances, exits, complications, explications, or whatever would bring him into competition with Sardou or Pinero[12]; or several dozen very efficient playwrights; the problem would be to make some intense effect carry across to the stalls and gallery, to convey a dominant tone. To obtain, with verse, an effect as immediate and direct as that of the best ballet. It would then be time to train new actors, and to revive *The Duchess of Malfi* in the interest of pleasure rather than culture. But as Shakespeare has been so degraded as to cease to remind us of anything, it is a good thing that his contemporaries should occasionally be revived in order to revive our dissatisfaction with the conditions under which they are produced.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* (1614) played at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, on 23 and 24 Nov 1919. The first performance by the newly formed Phoenix Society, it was produced by Allan Wade and featured actors Robert Farquharson as Duke Ferdinand, Ion Swinley as the Cardinal, and William Rea as Bosola. TSE attended the opening night performance; Vivien Eliot wrote in her diary for 23 Nov: "Dinner at Pounds. *Duchess of Malfi*" (Bodleian). The review was finished by 18 Dec (*L1* 424).

2. William Archer, who had criticized Elizabethan drama during his recent lectures at King's College, London, reviewed the Phoenix performance in the *Star* (25 Nov 1919), calling it a "farrago of horrors" and placing it "immeasurably below that Shakespearean level to which fanaticism seeks to raise it. . . . It was humiliating to see an audience of educated men and women solemnly affecting to find artistic enjoyment in such barbarous tomfoolery" (3). Journalist and Liberal MP Leo George Chiozza Money (1870-1944), author of *Riches and Poverty* (1905) and *The Triumph of Nationalization* (1920), wrote to the editor of the *Daily News* (27 Nov 1919) "to ask what purpose is served by these revivals of the drama of blood and filth, of which the blood is by far the least objectionable ingredient. Is Webster to be followed by the Restoration blackguards of Wycherley and Shadwell, who dealt in nothing so decent as blood?" (6). Money wrote again on 2 Dec: "I did not see the Phoenix production, but I hope that some fumigation took place" (6). William Cowper's *The Task: A Poem, in Six Books* appeared in 1785.

3. Among the collaborators was Montague Summers, founder of the Phoenix Society and editor of *The Works of Aphra Behn* (1915) and later *The Complete Works* of both Congreve (1923) and Wycherley (1924). Montague's intention for all of the Phoenix productions was to present each play with great attention "to the actual conditions of the theatre for which it was written" Summers, *The Restoration Theatre* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1934), 324.

4. English actress Cathleen Nesbitt (1888-1982) – who played the Duchess "beautifully, nobly," according to the *Times* reviewer (25 Nov 1919, 10) – first appeared in 1910 in Pinero's *The Cabinet Minister*, travelled with W. B. Yeats's Irish Players for a time, and later played leading roles in *The Winter's Tale*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and others.

5. *The Duchess of Malfi* III.ii.58-60; *read*: "Doth not the colour of my hair 'gin to change? / When I wax gray, I shall"; TSE included the final two lines (misquoted as here) in "The Death of the Duchess" (*WLF* 107).

6. *The Duchess of Malfi* II.iv. In this production, the Cardinal was played by Shakespearean actor Ion Swinley (1891-1937), known for his roles at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre company and later at the Old Vic, and his mistress was played by Edith Mary Evans (1888-1976), who first won acclaim in the Elizabethan Stage Society's production of *Troilus and Cressida* and had appeared recently in *The Merchant of Venice* at the Court Theatre.

7. *The Duchess of Malfi* IV.i. Ferdinand enters her darkened chamber and, feigning to offer the Duchess his own hand to kiss, gives her the severed hand of a dead man, whom he encourages her to believe is her husband, Antonio; Ferdinand's subsequent mental torture of the Duchess – surrounding her with raving madmen and presenting her with her own coffin – continues until she is strangled.

8. The Nuntius or messenger was a conventional role adapted from Senecan drama, where the anonymous character was used to relate action that occurred offstage. The Confidente (or confidante) was typically a female servant entrusted by the heroine with private affairs.

9. All plays either produced in recent years or currently playing at theaters in London's West End: *Othello* had just opened at the Scala Theatre on 17 Nov; Henrik Ibsen's *Rosmersholm* (1886) was performed at St. Martin's in June 1917; Paul Claudel's *L'Annonce faite à Marie* (1912), at the Strand on 10 June 1917; Austin Strong's *Three Wise Fools* (1918), at the Comedy Theatre from July 1919 until Feb 1920; and John L. Hobble's *Daddies* (1918), at the Haymarket from Sept 1919 until 31 Jan 1920.

10. Mozart's opera (1787) originally premiered in Prague but afterwards was performed more than 400 times throughout the nineteenth century at the Hoftheater ("court theatre") in Vienna. In London it was produced by the Carol Rosa Company at the Shaftesbury Theatre for three nights between 24 May and 13 June 1918.

11. Thomas Hardy's epic drama, *The Dynasts* – a composite of blank verse and prose published in three parts from 1904 to 1908 – was adapted for the stage by Harley Granville Barker and played at the Kingsway Theatre from 25 Nov 1914 until 30 Jan 1915. Barker's modified version was taken up by the Oxford University Dramatic Society under the direction of A. E. Drinkwater, who staged it again for four days beginning 10 Feb 1920. A reviewer for the *Athenaeum* (20 Feb 1920) wrote, "the level of acting was, on the whole, high, though there were no outstanding brilliant performances" (251).

12. Victorien Sardou (1831-1908) and Arthur Wing Pinero were the authors of highly successful modern plays in the genre of the *pièce bien faite* or "well-made play," several of which had been performed recently in London. Sardou's *La Tosca* (1887;1909) played from 9 Sept to 23 Oct 1919 at the Aldwych Theatre, and his *Fédora* (1882; 1908) had been playing at the Globe Theatre since 30 Oct. Pinero's *The Freaks: An Idyll of Suburbia* (1917) premiered at the New Theatre on 14 Feb 1918.

The Local Flavour[1]

In a world which is chiefly occupied with the task of keeping up to date with itself, it is a satisfaction to know that there is at least one man who has not only read but enjoyed, and not only enjoyed but read, such authors as Petronius and Herondas. That is Mr. Charles Whibley, and there are two statements to make about him: that he is not a critic, and that he is something which is almost as rare, if not quite as precious.[2] He has apparently read and enjoyed a great deal of English literature, and the part of it that he has most enjoyed is the literature of the great ages, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[3†] We may opine that Mr. Whibley has not uttered a single important original judgment upon any of this literature. On the other hand, how many have done so?[4†] Mr. Whibley is not a critic of men or of books; but he convinces us that if we read the books that he has read we should find them delightful as he has found them; and if we read them we can form our own opinions. And if he has not the balance of the critic, he has some other equipoise of his own. It is partly that his tastes are not puritanical, that he can talk about Restoration dramatists and others without apologizing for their "indecency"; it is partly his sense for the best local and temporal flavours; it is partly his healthy appetite.

A combination of non-critical, rather than uncritical, qualities made Mr. Whibley the most appropriate person in the world for the work by which he is best known. We should be more grateful for the "Tudor Translation Series" if we could find copies to be bought, and if we could afford to buy them when we found them.[5] But that is not Mr. Whibley's fault. The introductions which he wrote for some of the translators are all that such introductions should be. His Urquhart's *Rabelais* contains all the irrelevant information about that writer which is what is wanted to stimulate a taste for him.[6] After reading the introduction, to read Urquhart was the only pleasure in life. And therefore, in a country destitute of living criticism, Mr. Whibley is a useful person: for the first thing is that English literature should be read at all. The few people who talk intelligently about Stendhal and Flaubert and James know this; but the larger number of people who skim the conversation of the former do not know enough of English literature to be even insular.[7] There are two ways in which a writer

may lead us to profit by the work of dead writers. One is by isolating the essential, by pointing out the most intense in various kinds and separating it from the accidents of environment. This method is helpful only to the more intelligent people, who are capable of a unique enjoyment of perfect expression, and it concentrates on the very best in any art. The other method, that of Mr. Whibley, is to communicate a taste for the period – and for the very best of the period so far as it is of that period. That is not very easy either. For a pure journalist will not know any period well enough; a pure dilettante will know it too egotistically, as a fashion of his own. Mr. Whibley is really interested; and he has escaped, without any programme of revolt, from the present century into those of Tudor and Stuart. He escapes, and perhaps leads others, by virtue of a taste which is not exactly a literary taste.

The "Tudor Translations" form part of a pronounced taste. Some are better written than others. There is, of course, a world of difference – of which Mr. Whibley is perhaps unaware – between even Florio and his original.[8] The French of Montaigne is a mature language, and the English of Florio's living translation is not. Montaigne could be translated into the English of his time, but a similar work could not have been written in it. But as the English language matured it lost something that Florio and all his inferior colleagues had, and that they had in common with the language of Montaigne. It was not only the language, but the time. The prose of that age had life, a life to which later ages could not add, from which they could only take away. You find the same life, the same abundance, in Montaigne and Brantôme, the alteration in Rochefoucauld as in Hobbes, the desiccation in the classic prose of both languages, in Voltaire and in Gibbon.[9] Only, the French was originally richer and more mature – already in Joinville and Commines – and we have no prose to compare with Montaigne and Rabelais.[10] If Mr. Whibley had analysed this vitality, and told us why Holland and Underdowne, Nashe and Martin Marprelate are still worth reading, then he could have shown us how to recognize this quality when it, or something like it, appears in our own lifetime.[11] But Mr. Whibley is not an analyst. His taste, even, becomes less certain as he fixes it on individuals within his period. On Surrey's blank verse he is feeble; he does not even give Surrey the credit of having anticipated some of Tennyson's best effects.[12] He has no praise for Golding, quite one of the best of the verse translators; he apologizes for him by saying that Ovid demands no strength or energy![13] There is strength and energy, at least, in

Marlowe's *Amores*.[14] And he omits mention of Gawain Douglas, who, though he wrote in Scots, was surely a "Tudor" translator.[15] Characteristically, Mr. Whibley praises Chapman because

> it gives proof of an abounding life, a quenchless energy. There is a grandeur and spirit in Chapman's rendering, not unworthy the original . . . [103]

This is commonplace, and it is uncritical. And a critic should not use so careless a phrase as "Tasso's masterpiece" [107]. The essay on Congreve does not add much to our understanding:

> And so he set upon the boards a set of men and women of quick brains and cynical humours, who talked with the brilliance and rapidity wherewith the finished swordsman fences. [253]

We have heard of this conversation like fencing before. And the suspicion is in our breast that Mr. Whibley might admire George Meredith.[16] The essay on Ralegh gives still less. The reality of that pleasing pirate and monopolist has escaped, and only the national hero is left. And yet Ralegh, and Swift, and Congreve, and the underworld of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century letters, are somehow kept alive by what Mr. Whibley says of them.[17]

Accordingly, Mr. Whibley does not disappear in the jungle of journalism and false criticism; he deserves a "place upon the shelves" of those who care for English literature. He has the first requisite of a critic: interest in his subject, and ability to communicate an interest in it. His defects are both of intellect and feeling. He has no dissociative faculty. There were very definite vices and definite shortcomings and immaturities in the literature he admires; and as he is not the person to tell us of the vices and shortcomings, he is not the person to lay before us the work of absolutely the finest quality. He exercises neither of the tools of the critic: comparison and analysis. He has not the austerity of passion which can detect unerringly the transition from work of eternal intensity to work that is merely beautiful, and from work that is beautiful to work that is merely charming. For the critic needs to be able not only to saturate himself in the spirit and the fashion of a time – the local flavor – but also to separate himself suddenly from it in appreciation of the highest creative work.

And he needs something else that Mr. Whibley lacks: a creative interest, a focus upon the immediate future. The important critic is the person who

is absorbed in the present problems of art, and who wishes to bring the forces of the past to bear upon the solution of these problems. If the critic consider Congreve, for instance, he will have always at the back of his mind the question: What has Congreve got that is pertinent to our dramatic art? Even if he is solely engaged in trying to understand Congreve, this will make all the difference; inasmuch as to understand anything is to understand from a point of view. Most critics have some creative interest – it may be, instead of an interest in any art, an interest (like Mr. Paul More's) in morals.[18†] These remarks were introduced only to assist in giving the books of Mr. Whibley a place, a particular but unticketed place, neither with criticism, nor with history, nor with plain journalism; and the trouble would not have been taken if the books were not thought to be worth placing.[19†]

NOTES

1. As printed in *SW*, where it was incorporated into the essay "Imperfect Critics" as the third of five parts, three of which had been previously published; for a list of the contents of "Imperfect Critics," see "Swinburne as Critic" (119, n. 1). "The Local Flavour" appeared originally in *The Athenaeum*, 4676 (12 Dec 1919), 1332-33, a review of *Literary Studies* by Charles Whibley (London: Macmillan, 1919). Pp. 370.

2. Whibley's essays about Petronius (ca. 20-66 AD) and Greek dramatist Herodas or Herondas (ca. 300-250 BC) originally appeared in his *Studies in Frankness* (1898).

3†. In *Ath*: "seventeenth centuries. He begins with the Tudors, and stops, in this volume at least, at Swift. We may opine"

4†. In *Ath*: "the other hand, who else has done so?"

5. Whibley regularly contributed introductions for volumes in W. E. Henley's *The Tudor Translations*, an expensive, fine press series which began in 1892 with Florio's *Montaigne* and featured introductory essays by prominent scholars. Whibley himself later edited the second series of the *The Tudor Translations* – beginning in 1924 with Heywood's translation of *The Conspiracy of Catiline and the War of Jugurtha* by Sallust – and commissioned TSE to write the introduction to *Seneca His Tenne Tragedies* (1927), nos. 11 and 12 in the series.

6. Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, trans. Sir Thomas Urquhart and Peter Le Motteux, intro. Charles Whibley, 3 vols, *The Tudor Translations*, No. 25 (London: David Nutt, 1900).

7. In a letter to Mary Hutchinson of 11 July 1919, TSE included Flaubert and Stendhal on a list of cultural icons appreciated by few but discussed by many: "they mostly begin as personal enthusiasms *or convictions* of people who know and can give reasons. But in the ordinary mind they are completely unorganised" (*L1* 378).

8. Whibley writes that John Florio, who published the first English translation of Montaigne's *Essais* in 1603, "is often inaccurate, and not seldom he misses the point"; compared with other translations, however, "Florio's is a living book" (87).

9. TSE's account of the deterioration of French and English prose begins in the sixteenth century with Montaigne and Pierre de Bourdeille, seigneur de Brantôme (1540-1614) – a copy

of whose *Les Vies des dames galantes* [*Lives of the Gallant Ladies*] (1666) he owned – and concludes with Enlightenment writers of the eighteenth century, Voltaire and Edward Gibbon, sometimes called the English Voltaire. He likely offered a similar account when he gave a "survey of prose from Bacon to Hobbes" in his 1918 Extension course (1.756-57).

10. Jean de Joinville (ca. 1225-1317) and Philippe de Commines (ca. 1447-1511) were both early French historians; Whibley refers to the latter as a master of modern history (5).

11. Whibley praises Philemon Holland (1552-1637), known for his translations of Livy, Pliny, Plutarch, and Suetonius, calling him "a translator of another kind. His legendary pen was apt for any enterprise" (80); Holland's translation of Suetonius's *History of Twelve Caesars* (1899) comprised nos. 21-22 in the series. Whibley briefly mentions Thomas Underdowne (fl. 1566-1587) and his *An Aethiopian Historie* (ca. 1569), a translation of the ancient Greek *Aethiopica* of Heliodorus, which was no. 5 in the series.

12. "Having invented blank verse," writes Whibley, "Surrey used it timidly and with caution. . . . His love of monosyllable is as constant as Tennyson's" (89).

13. The translation of the *Metamorphosis* by Arthur Golding (ca. 1535-1606), Whibley argues, is "rapid, fluent, and monotonous": "Strength and energy are beyond Golding's compass, and he wisely chose a poet to translate who made no demand upon the qualities he did not possess" (101).

14. Marlowe's rhymed translations of Ovid's sequence of love poems, *Amores* (ca. 16 BC), appeared in his *Certaine of Ovid's Elegies* (ca. 1595) and *All Ovid's Elegies* (ca. 1602).

15. For TSE's familiarity with Douglas's Scots translation of the *Aeneid*, see "Was There a Scottish Literature?" (92).

16. The narrator of Meredith's *The Egoist: A Comedy in Narrative* (London: C. Kegan Paul, 1879) describes a lively conversation between the protagonists, which "won attention like a fencing match of a couple keen with the foils to display the mutual skill" (1.231).

17. In the penultimate chapter of *Literary Studies*, Whibley uses the phrase "an underworld of letters" to describe the late seventeenth-century advent of "an inferno inhabited by lettered vagabonds, who matched, in scholarship and scurrility, the heroes of Petronius" (298).

18†. In *Ath*: "in morals; but an interest in morals will not produce sound criticism of art. Consequently, we may say that the only valuable criticism is that of the workman; conceding that a workman in one art may have valuable things to say, analogically, about another. Criticism is not an independent practice, but the by-product of some other activity. These remarks were introduced"

19†. In *Ath*: "the book of Mr. Whibley"; "if the book were not thought"

Swinburne as Poet[1]

It is a question of some nicety to decide how much must be read of any particular poet.[2†] And it is not a question merely of the size of the poet. There are some poets whose every line has unique value. There are others who can be taken by a few poems universally agreed upon. There are others who need be read only in selections, but what selections are read will not very much matter. Of Swinburne, we should like to have the *Atalanta* entire, and a volume of selections which should certainly contain "The Leper," "Laus Veneris," and "The Triumph of Time." It ought to contain many more, but there is perhaps no other single poem which it would be an error to omit. A student of Swinburne will want to read one of the Stuart plays and dip into *Tristram of Lyonesse*.[3] But almost no one, to-day, will wish to read the whole of Swinburne. It is not because Swinburne is voluminous; certain poets, equally voluminous, must be read entire. The necessity and the difficulty of a selection are due to the peculiar nature of Swinburne's contribution, which, it is hardly too much to say, is of a very different kind from that of any other poet of equal reputation.

We may take it as undisputed that Swinburne did make a contribution;[4†] that he did something that had not been done before, and that what he did will not turn out to be a fraud. And from that we may proceed to inquire what Swinburne's contribution was, and why, whatever critical solvents we employ to break down the structure of his verse, this contribution remains. The test is this: agreed that we do not (and I think that the present generation does not) greatly enjoy Swinburne,[5†] and agreed that (a more serious condemnation) at one period of our lives we did enjoy him and now no longer enjoy him; nevertheless, the words which we use to state our grounds of dislike or indifference cannot be applied to Swinburne as they can to bad poetry. The words of condemnation are words which express his qualities. You may say "diffuse." But the diffuseness is essential; had Swinburne practised greater concentration his verse would be, not better in the same kind, but a different thing. His diffuseness is one of his glories. That so little material as appears to be employed in "The Triumph of Time" should release such an amazing number of words, requires what there is no reason to call anything but genius. You could not condense "The Triumph of

Time." You could only leave out. And this would destroy the poem; though no one stanza seems essential. Similarly, a considerable quantity – a volume of selections – is necessary to give the quality of Swinburne although there is perhaps no one poem essential in this selection.

If, then, we must be very careful in applying terms of censure, like "diffuse," we must be equally careful of praise. "The beauty of Swinburne's verse is the sound," people say, explaining, "he had little visual imagination."[6] I am inclined to think that the word "beauty" is hardly to be used in connexion with Swinburne's verse at all; but in any case the beauty or effect of sound is neither that of music nor that of poetry which can be set to music. There is no reason why verse intended to be sung should not present a sharp visual image or convey an important intellectual meaning, for it supplements the music by another means of affecting the feelings. What we get in Swinburne is an expression by sound, which could not possibly associate itself with music. For what he gives is not images and ideas and music, it is one thing with a curious mixture of suggestions of all three.

> Shall I come, if I swim? wide are the waves, you see:
> Shall I come, if I fly, my dear Love, to thee?[7]

This is Campion, and an example of the kind of music that is not to be found in Swinburne. It is an arrangement and choice of words which has a sound-value and at the same time a coherent comprehensible meaning, and the two things – the musical value and meaning[8†] – are two things, not one. But in Swinburne there is no *pure* beauty – no pure beauty of sound, or of image, or of idea.

> Music, when soft voices die,
> Vibrates in the memory –
> Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
> Live within the sense they quicken.
>
> Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
> Are heaped for the belovèd's bed;
> And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
> Love itself shall slumber on.[9]

I quote from Shelley, because Shelley is supposed to be the master of Swinburne; and because his song, like that of Campion, has what

Swinburne has not – a beauty of music and a beauty of content; and because it is clearly and simply expressed, with only two adjectives. Now, in Swinburne the meaning and the sound are one thing. He is concerned with the meaning of the word in a peculiar way: he employs, or rather "works," the word's meaning. And this is connected with an interesting fact about his vocabulary: he uses the most general word, because his emotion is never particular, never in direct line of vision, never focused; it is emotion reinforced, not by intensification, but by expansion.

There lived a singer in France of old
By the tideless dolorous midland sea.
In a land of sand and ruin and gold
There shone one woman, and none but she.[10]

You see that Provence is the merest point of diffusion here. Swinburne defines the place by the most general word, which has for him its own value. "Gold," "ruin," "dolorous": it is not merely the sound that he wants, but the vague associations of idea that the words give him. He has not his eye on a particular place, as:[11†]

Li ruscelletti, che dei verdi colli
del Casentin discendon giuso in Arno . . .[12†]

It is, in fact, the word that gives him the thrill, not the object. When you take to pieces any verse of Swinburne, you find always that the object was not there – only the word. Compare

Snowdrops that plead for pardon
And pine for fright

with the daffodils that come before the swallow dares.[13] The snowdrop of Swinburne disappears, the daffodil of Shakespeare remains. The swallow of Shakespeare remains in the verse in *Macbeth*; the bird of Wordsworth

Breaking the silence of the seas

remains; the swallow of "Itylus" disappears.[14] Compare, again, a chorus of *Atalanta* with a chorus from Athenian tragedy.[15†] The chorus of Swinburne is almost a parody of the Athenian: it is sententious, but it has not even the significance of commonplace.

At least we witness of thee ere we die
That these things are not otherwise, but thus. . . .

Before the beginning of years
There came to the making of man
Time with a gift of tears;
Grief with a glass that ran. . . .[16]

This is not merely "music"; it is effective because it appears to be a tremendous statement, like statements made in our dreams; when we wake up we find that the "glass that ran" would do better for time than for grief, and that the gift of tears would be as appropriately bestowed by grief as by time.

It might seem to be intimated, by what has been said, that the work of Swinburne can be shown to be a sham, just as bad verse is a sham.[17†] It would only be so if you could produce or suggest something that it pretends to be and is not. The world of Swinburne does not depend upon some other world which it simulates; it has the necessary completeness and self-sufficiency for justification and permanence. It is impersonal, and no one else could have made it. The deductions are true to the postulates. It is indestructible. None of the obvious complaints that were or might have been brought to bear upon the first *Poems and Ballads* holds good.[18] The poetry is not morbid,[19†] it is not erotic, is not destructive. These are adjectives which can be applied to the material, the human feelings, which in Swinburne's case do not exist. The morbidity is not of human feeling but of language. Language in a healthy state presents the object, is so close to the object that the two are identified.

They are identified in the verse of Swinburne solely because the object has ceased to exist,[20†] because the meaning is merely the hallucination of meaning, because language, uprooted, has adapted itself to an independent life of atmospheric nourishment. In Swinburne, for example, we see the word "weary" flourishing in this way independent of the particular and actual weariness of flesh or spirit. The bad poet dwells partly in a world of objects and partly in a world of words, and he never can get them to fit. Only a man of genius could dwell so exclusively and consistently among words as Swinburne. His language is not, like the language of bad poetry, dead. It is very much alive, with this singular life of its own. But the language which is more important to us is that which is struggling to digest and express new objects, new groups of objects, new feelings, new aspects, as, for instance, the prose of Mr. James Joyce or the earlier Conrad.[21†]

NOTES

1. As printed in *SE*; first revised and retitled in *SW* from "Swinburne," *The Athenaeum*, 4681 (16 Jan 1920) 72-73. A review of *Selections from A. C. Swinburne*, ed. Edmund Gosse and Thomas James Wise (London: Heinemann, 1919). Pp. xi + 288. Composed by 11 Jan (*L1* 430).

2†. In *Ath*, the review began with the following paragraph, which was revised in *SW*: "Without having at hand the older volume of Selections made by Swinburne himself it may yet be said that the present selection is a good one. It would have been more 'representative' if it had included one or two of the *Songs before Sunrise*, and the omission of 'Laus Veneris' and especially 'The Leper' is regrettable. What one would like to have would be a volume of selections including these poems and omitting the two choruses from *Atalanta*, and another volume containing the whole of *Atalanta*. The student, of course, wants to read one of the Stuart plays and to dip into *Tristram of Lyonesse*. Very few people will want to read these, and almost no one will want to read the whole of Swinburne. A selection is therefore necessary, and also is sufficient. It is not because Swinburne is voluminous; certain other poets, equally voluminous, must be read complete. And it is not that a few of Swinburne's poems are much better than the rest. The necessity and the difficulty of a selection are due to the peculiar nature of Swinburne's 'contribution,' which, it is hardly too much to say, is of a very different kind from that of any other poet of equal reputation."

3. In his 1917 Extension lectures on modern English literature, TSE discussed Swinburne's early verse play *Atalanta in Calydon* (1865) alongside *Poems and Ballads* (1866) – which contains "Laus Veneris," "The Leper," and "The Triumph of Time" – and assigned selections from *Songs before Sunrise* (1871) (1.590). Swinburne's trilogy about the history of Mary Queen of Scots included *Chastelard* (1865), *Bothwell* (1874), and *Mary Stuart* (1881); his Arthurian verse-narrative, *Tristram of Lyonesse*, appeared in 1882. TSE's review copy of *Selections from Swinburne* bears his bookplate and two notes on the title page: one that ironically reads "Forging Ahead" and the other suggesting that the editors' names "possibly explain the absence of Laus Veneris and The Leper."

4†. In *Ath*: "We may agree that Swinburne did make a contribution;"

5†. In *Ath*: "generation does not) enjoy Swinburne,"

6. TSE paraphrases from Robert Lynd's essay on Swinburne in *Old and New Masters*, which he had recently reviewed (54). Lynd admits that "we find beautiful passages" in Swinburne but argues that his "sense of rhythm . . . was divorced in large measure from his sense of reality. He was a poet without the poet's gift of sight" (196).

7. "Shall I come, if I swim?," from *A Book of Aires* (1601) by Thomas Campion and Philip Rosseter; though the song originally appeared under Rosseter's name, the editor of the Muses' Library edition that TSE owned – *Poetical Works (in English) of Thomas Campion* (London: Routledge, 1907) – suggests that Campion likely provided the text.

8†. In *Ath*: "things, the musical beauty and the meaning,"

9. Percy Bysshe Shelley, "To – " ("Music, when soft voices die") (1824). TSE owned *The Complete Poetical Works of Shelley*, ed. Thomas Hutchinson (London: Oxford UP, 1919).

10. "The Triumph of Time," ll. 321-24.

11†. In *Ath*: "a particular place."

12†. In *Ath*: "Lui ruscelleti"

Dante, *Inferno* XXX.64-65. *Trans*: "The rivulets that from the verdant hills of Casentino descend into the Arno" (*DC1* 339). In the eighth circle, Adam of Brescia describes the

beginnings of the Arno river as they pass through the Casentino valley, where Dante lived for a time during his exile from Florence.

13. TSE compares an excerpt from the first stanza of Swinburne's "Before the Mirror" (1866) to Shakespeare's "daffadils, / That come before the swallow dares, and take / The winds of March with beauty" in *The Winter's Tale* IV.iv.116-19. He had read Robert Lynd's critique of Swinburne's lines in *Old and New Masters*: "The snowdrop image . . . is, charming as is the sound of the lines, nonsense. The picture of the snowdrops pleading for pardon and pining from fright would have been impossible to a poet with the realizing genius of the great writers" (196).

14. Shakespeare's swallow is described by Banquo as a "guest of summer, / The temple-haunting martlet" (*Macbeth* I.vi.3-6). The speaker of Wordsworth's "The Solitary Reaper" (1807) imagines hearing "the Cuckoo-bird, / Breaking the silence of the seas / Among the farthest Hebrides." Swinburne's "Itylus" (1866) begins, "Swallow, my sister, O sister swallow / How can thine heart be full of the spring?"

15†. In *Ath*: "a chorus from Athenian tragedy. Your specimen of the latter may possibly be full of sententious commonplace; but it is significant commonplace. The chorus of Swinburne"

16. From "Who hath given man speech?" and "Before the beginning of years," two of the three choruses excerpted from *Atalanta in Calydon* (ll. 1188-89, 314-17) in this edition; *read*: "Time, with" and "Grief, with"

17†. In *Ath*: "a sham just as bad verse is often a sham."

18. Swinburne's first volume of verse was met with critical outrage on moral grounds, causing the publisher to withdraw its sale for fear of criminal prosecution. In "Mr. Swinburne's New Poems" (Nov 1866), the *Saturday Review* writer called Swinburne "the libidinous laureate of a pack of satyrs" and upbraided him for ignoring "the current notions of decency and dignity and social duty."

19†. In *Ath*: "hold good. It is not morbid,"

20†. In *Ath* (no paragraph break): "so close to the object that they are one thing. They are one thing in the verse of Swinburne simply because the object has ceased to exist,"

21†. In *Ath*: "Mr. James Joyce or Mr. Joseph Conrad."

William Blake[1]

I

If one follows Blake's mind through the several stages of his poetic development it is impossible to regard him as a naïf, a wild man, a wild pet for the supercultivated. The strangeness is evaporated, the peculiarity is seen to be the peculiarity of all great poetry: something which is found (not everywhere) in Homer and Aeschylus and Dante and Villon, and profound and concealed in the work of Shakespeare – and also in another form in Montaigne and in Spinoza. It is merely a peculiar honesty, which, in a world too frightened to be honest, is peculiarly terrifying. It is an honesty against which the whole world conspires, because it is unpleasant.[2†] Blake's poetry has the unpleasantness of great poetry. Nothing that can be called morbid or abnormal or perverse, none of the things which exemplify the sickness of an epoch or a fashion, has this quality; only those things which, by some extraordinary labour of simplification, exhibit the essential sickness or strength of the human soul. And this honesty never exists without great technical accomplishment. The question about Blake the man is the question of the circumstances that concurred to permit this honesty in his work, and what circumstances define its limitations. The favouring conditions probably include these two: that, being early apprenticed to a manual occupation, he was not compelled to acquire any other education in literature than he wanted, or to acquire it for any other reason than that he wanted it; and that, being a humble engraver, he had no journalistic-social career open to him.[3]

There was, that is to say, nothing to distract him from his interests or to corrupt these interests: neither the ambitions of parents or wife, nor the standards of society, nor the temptations of success; nor was he exposed to imitation of himself or of anyone else. These circumstances – not his supposed inspired and untaught spontaneity – are what make him innocent. His early poems show what the poems of a boy of genius ought to show, immense power of assimilation. Such early poems are not, as usually supposed, crude attempts to do something beyond the boy's capacity; they are, in the case of a boy of real promise, more likely to be quite mature and

successful attempts to do something small. So with Blake, his early poems are technically admirable, and their originality is in an occasional rhythm. The verse of *Edward III* deserves study.[4] But his affection for certain Elizabethans is not so surprising as his affinity with the very best work of his own century. He is very like Collins, he is very eighteenth century. The poem "Whether on Ida's Shady Brow" is eighteenth-century work; the movement, the weight of it, the syntax, the choice of words:

> The *languid* strings do scarcely move!
> The sound is *forc'd*, the notes are few![5]

this is contemporary with Gray and Collins, it is the poetry of a language which has undergone the discipline of prose.[6†] Blake up to twenty is decidedly a traditional.

Blake's beginnings as a poet, then, are as normal as the beginnings of Shakespeare. His method of composition, in his mature work, is exactly like that of other poets. He has an idea (a feeling, an image), he develops it by accretion or expansion, alters his verse often, and hesitates often over the final choice.[7*] The idea, of course, simply comes, but upon arrival it is subjected to prolonged manipulation. In the first phase Blake is concerned with verbal beauty; in the second he becomes the apparent naïf, really the mature intelligence. It is only when the ideas become more automatic, come more freely and are less manipulated, that we begin to suspect their origin, to suspect that they spring from a shallower source.

The *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, and the poems from the Rossetti manuscript, are the poems of a man with a profound interest in human emotions, and a profound knowledge of them.[8] The emotions are presented in an extremely simplified, abstract form. This form is one illustration of the eternal struggle of art against education, of the literary artist against the continuous deterioration of language.

It is important that the artist should be highly educated in his own art; but his education is one that is hindered rather than helped by the ordinary processes of society which constitute education for the ordinary man. For these processes consist largely in the acquisition of impersonal ideas which obscure what we really are and feel, what we really want, and what really excites our interest. It is of course not the actual information acquired, but the conformity which the accumulation of knowledge is apt to impose, that is harmful. Tennyson is a very fair example of a poet almost wholly encrusted with opinion,[9†] almost wholly merged into his environment.

Blake, on the other hand, knew what interested him, and he therefore presents only the essential, only, in fact, what can be presented, and need not be explained. And because he was not distracted, or frightened, or occupied in anything but exact statements, he understood. He was naked, and saw man naked, and from the centre of his own crystal. To him there was no more reason why Swedenborg should be absurd than Locke. He accepted Swedenborg, and eventually rejected him, for reasons of his own.[10] He approached everything with a mind unclouded by current opinions. There was nothing of the superior person about him. This makes him terrifying.

II

But if there was nothing to distract him from sincerity there were, on the other hand, the dangers to which the naked man is exposed. His philosophy, like his visions, like his insight, like his technique, was his own. And accordingly he was inclined to attach more importance to it than an artist should; this is what makes him eccentric, and makes him inclined to formlessness.

> But most through midnight streets I hear
> How the youthful harlot's curse
> Blasts the new-born infant's tear,
> And blights with plagues the marriage hearse,

is the naked vision;

> Love seeketh only self to please,
> To bind another to its delight,
> Joys in another's loss of ease,
> And builds a Hell in Heaven's despite,[11]

is the naked observation; and *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* is naked philosophy, presented. But Blake's occasional marriages of poetry and philosophy are not so felicitous.

> He who would do good to another, must do it in Minute Particulars.
> General Good is the plea of the scoundrel, hypocrite, and flatterer:
> For Art and Science cannot exist but in minutely organized particulars.
> . . .[12]

One feels that the form is not well chosen. The borrowed philosophy of Dante and Lucretius is perhaps not so interesting, but it injures their form

less.[13] Blake did not have that more Mediterranean gift of form which knows how to borrow, as Dante borrowed his theory of the soul; he must needs create a philosophy as well as a poetry. A similar formlessness attacks his draughtsmanship. The fault is most evident, of course, in the longer poems – or rather, the poems in which structure is important. You cannot create a very large poem without introducing a more impersonal point of view, or splitting it up into various personalities. But the weakness of the long poems is certainly not that they are too visionary, too remote from the world. It is that Blake did not see enough, became too much occupied with ideas.[14†]

We have the same respect for Blake's philosophy (and perhaps for that of Samuel Butler) that we have for an ingenious piece of home-made furniture: we admire the man who has put it together out of the odds and ends about the house.[15] England has produced a fair number of these resourceful Robinson Crusoes; but we are not really so remote from the Continent, or from our own past, as to be deprived of the advantages of culture if we wish them.

We may speculate, for amusement, whether it would not have been beneficial to the north of Europe generally, and to Britain in particular, to have had a more continuous religious history. The local divinities of Italy were not wholly exterminated by Christianity, and they were not reduced to the dwarfish fate which fell upon our trolls and pixies. The latter, with the major Saxon deities, were perhaps no great loss in themselves, but they left an empty place; and perhaps our mythology was further impoverished by the divorce from Rome. Milton's celestial and infernal regions are large but insufficiently furnished apartments filled by heavy conversation; and one remarks about the Puritan mythology its thinness.[16†] And about Blake's supernatural territories, as about the supposed ideas that dwell there, we cannot help commenting on a certain meanness of culture. They illustrate the crankiness, the eccentricity, which frequently affects writers outside of the Latin traditions, and which such a critic as Arnold should certainly have rebuked. And they are not essential to Blake's inspiration.

Blake was endowed with a capacity for considerable understanding of human nature, with a remarkable and original sense of language and the music of language, and a gift of hallucinated vision. Had these been controlled by a respect for impersonal reason, for common sense, for the objectivity of science, it would have been better for him. What his genius required, and what it sadly lacked, was a framework of accepted

and traditional ideas which would have prevented him from indulging in a philosophy of his own, and concentrated his attention upon the problems of the poet. Confusion of thought, emotion, and vision is what we find in such a work as *Also Sprach Zarathustra*;[17] it is eminently not a Latin virtue. The concentration resulting from a framework of mythology and theology and philosophy is one of the reasons why Dante is a classic, and Blake only a poet of genius. The fault is perhaps not with Blake himself, but with the environment which failed to provide what such a poet needed; perhaps the circumstances compelled him to fabricate, perhaps the poet required the philosopher and mythologist; although the conscious Blake may have been quite unconscious of the motives.

NOTES

1. As printed in *SE*; originally "The Naked Man," *The Athenaeum*, 4685 (13 Feb 1920) 208-09, a review of *William Blake the Man* (London:Dent, 1919), pp. 202, by Charles Gardner (b. 1874). The essay was titled "Blake" in *SW*, where it was first divided into two parts.

2†. In *Ath*: "It is an honesty which the whole world conspires against, because"

3. Blake was ten years old when his father sent him to a drawing school in the Strand; four years later he was apprenticed to printmaker and engraver James Basire, "a master of the technical part of his craft" (17), according to Gardner.

4. *King Edward the Third*, a dramatic fragment in *Poetical Sketches* (1783)

5. "Whether on Ida's shady brow" is the first line of "To the Muses," published in *Poetical Sketches* (1783) when Blake was twenty-six. TSE quotes the last two lines of the poem, which he also invokes in "The Romantic Generation, If It Existed," "The Phoenix Society," and elsewhere (79, 193).

6†. In *Ath*: "discipline of prose; it is not remote from Landor. Blake up to twenty"

7*. TSE's note, added in *SW*: "I do not know why M. Berger should say, without qualification, in his *William Blake: Mysticisme et poésie*, that 'son respect pour l'esprit qui soufflait en lui et qui dictait ses paroles l'empêchait de les corriger jamais.' Dr. Sampson, in his Oxford edition of Blake, gives us to understand that Blake believed much of his writing to be automatic, but observes that Blake's 'meticulous care in composition is everywhere apparent in the poems preserved in rough draft . . . alteration on alteration, rearrangement after rearrangement, deletions, additions, and inversions. . . .'" TSE quotes first from Pierre Berger, *William Blake: Mysticisme et poésie* (Paris: Société française d'imprimerie et de librairie, 1907), 243; *trans*: His respect for the spirit that breathed into him and dictated his words prevented him from ever revising them. His second quotation is from John Sampson, "Bibliographical Introduction," *The Poetical Works of William Blake* (Oxford UP, 1913), xix.

8. TSE refers to *The Songs of Innocence and of Experience* (1794) and the *Rossetti Manuscript*, also known as the *Manuscript Book*, which contains sketches and poems spanning two decades (ca. 1789-1811) and which Dante Gabriel Rossetti acquired twenty years after Blake's death.

9†. In *Ath* and *SW*: "parasitic opinion,"

10. According to Gardner, Blake initially rejected the "philosophy of the five senses," as in Locke's empiricism, in favor of the mysticism of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), whose particularized visions appealed to Blake's aversion to abstraction (109). Gardner concludes by aligning Blake's subsequent "repudiation of Swedenborg" with his rejection of Luther and "the whole of protestant theology" (75).

11. From the last stanzas, respectively, of "London" and "The Clod & the Pebble," in *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*.

12. *Jerusalem* (1804), plate 55, ll. 60-62.

13. *De rerum natura* [*On the Nature of Things*] by Roman poet Lucretius (Titus Lucretius Carus, c. 99-55 BC) explicitly adopts and stylizes the precepts of Epicurean philosophy. Dante's *Commedia*, TSE later argued, borrows its intellectual foundations from Aristotle, especially his philosophy of the soul in *De anima*, by way of the scholasticism of Thomas Aquinas (232).

14†. In *Ath*: "occupied with ideas. But even these poems evince an intelligence more powerful, in its way, than that of, let us say, either Tennyson or Browning." The *Ath* review ended here.

15. Butler espoused a modified Darwinian philosophy that emphasized the guiding role of inherited or "unconscious memory" in the process of evolution. In his 1917 Extension lectures, TSE called Butler a "solitary figure" who possessed "complete independence of mind. No political, social, or literary movement to forward" (1.590).

16†. In *SW*: "the Puritan mythology an historical thinness."

17. *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (1883-85). TSE suggested that Nietzsche's philosophy lacked austerity and therefore "evaporates when detached from its literary qualities" (401).

TEXTUAL NOTE

In *Ath*, the review began with the following passage, which was deleted in *SW*:

> This book is not well written, and it is not a complete success in the attempt implied by the title. It is a readable short biography, not a critique; it is an honest, and not, indeed, a useless book. There is very little to which exception need be taken, and at least it does not set us on the wrong tack. We are not led to believe that Blake was abnormal or hallucinated; we are not encouraged to take too seriously the fact that the infant Blake saw angels in the foliage of Peckham Rye, or to believe that his method of composition was automatic writing. We are left unsatisfied; the book displays no profound analytic ability. But it allows the important fact to appear: that Blake's mind was a perfectly sane mind of abnormal intensity and strong passions, occupied with intelligible objects, and appearing under peculiar conditions, and conditions in some ways peculiarly favourable.
>
> The conception of Blake extracted from Mr. Gardner's book or from any tolerable biography is confirmed by re-reading Blake's poems from beginning to end.

Gardner writes of Blake's youthful visionary experience: "from the first he was peculiar, sensitive, and liable to visions. His first recorded vision was in Peckham Rye. There he saw a tree filled with angels. He was neither startled nor surprised" (13). Gardner concludes that Blake's visions "came to him so naturally that it never occurred to him that others might regard them as symptoms of abnormality or insanity" (46).

The Phoenix Society

To the Editor of *The Athenaeum*

The Athenaeum, 4687 (27 Feb 1920) 285

Sir, – The Phoenix Society, which has recently produced a play of Webster and a play of Dryden, is appealing to its subscribers, of whom I am one, to endeavour to secure more subscribers at reduced rates for the remaining three performances of the season.[1] It appears that the receipts from subscriptions have been inadequate to the expenses of production.

The so-called cultivated and civilized class is not expected to relieve the necessities of either literature or painting. It is assumed that poetry only pays if it is bought by thousands of people one has never heard of;[2] and that painting only pays if it is bought by some rich people whom one is not otherwise anxious to know; but a Society like the Phoenix can appeal only to the *intelligentsia*, and at a price quite within the *intelligentsia's* means. Here then was an opportunity for the *intelligentsia* to declare its convictions: but the sounds are forced, and the notes very few.[3]

Whether the performances have been good or bad has nothing to do with the matter. Apathy is more flagitious than abuse; we can almost condone the offence of Mr. William Archer, whom we never supposed to be a member of the *intelligentsia*; we cannot excuse the torpor of people who would despise Mr. Archer.[4] The performance of Dryden's play seemed to me praiseworthy, and the actors had devoted hard work to a production which certainly could not add to their popular notoriety.[5] But the point is that Dryden is a great poet and a great dramatist, and the Civilized Class has not supported the people who would support him, the Civilized Class has not supported Dryden against Archer. If, at the next performance of the Phoenix, the Civilized Class has not taken advantage of the reduced rates, I shall no longer be able to stifle my suspicion that the Civilized Class is a myth.

I am, Sir,
Your obliged obedient servant,

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. The Phoenix Society was an independent London theatre group founded in Sept 1919 to produce English plays from the Elizabethan and Restoration periods. Co-founder Montague Summers wrote in the first circular that the society "intended to present each play, not in a spirit of pedantic antiquarianism, but nevertheless with due regard to the actual conditions of the theatre for which it was written." Named for the seventeenth-century theatre in Drury Lane also known as the Cockpit, the Phoenix Society operated nominally under the auspices of the Stage Society and produced twenty-six plays in six years. The first season began in Nov 1919 with Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* and Dryden's *Marriage A-la-Mode* (8-9 Feb 1920); the remaining three performances included Heywood's *The Fair Maid of the West* (11-12 Apr), Otway's *Venice Preserv'd* (28, 30 Nov), and Jonson's *Volpone* (30 Jan, 1 Feb 1921). For TSE's review of the first production, see "*The Duchess of Malfi* at the Lyric: and Poetic Drama" (170).

2. Literary critic and future contributor to the *Criterion* H. P. Collins responded on 5 Mar 1920: "Will you kindly allow space for one of 'the thousands of people one has never heard of' to protest against the careless arraignment of the intelligentsia contained in Mr. T. S. Eliot's letter on the Phoenix Society? . . . Without being a disciple of Mr. Archer, one may consider that the production of plays by Webster or Dryden is not an essential of culture" (315).

3. TSE adapts the final line of Blake's "To the Muses" – "The sound is *forc'd*, the notes are few!" – which he also quoted in "The Romantic Generation, If It Existed" (79) and "William Blake" (188).

4. William Archer's condemnation of Elizabethan drama and its revivals had stirred controversy in autumn 1919, when he delivered a series of lectures at King's College, London (published in 1923 as *The Old Drama and the New*) denouncing the plays for their haphazard construction and implausible conventions. Archer continued his campaign in the *Observer* (12 Oct 1919), where he asked, "Why revive old rubbish?" (8), as well as in the *Star* (25 Nov) and the *Nineteenth Century* (Jan 1920). TSE wrote to his mother on 22 Feb 1920: "I must write a number of letters this evening to try to get subscribers for the Phoenix Society . . . on behalf of which I have been trying to fight against William Archer, who is down on it" (*L1* 447). He criticized Archer's opposition to the Phoenix Society in "*The Duchess of Malfi* at the Lyric: and Poetic Drama" (170) and later returned to it at length in "Four Elizabethan Dramatists" (503).

5. The Phoenix production of *Marriage A-la-Mode* starred Rita Thom as Palmyra, Murry Kinnell as Leonidas, Nicholas Hannen as Palamede, Ion Swinley as Rhodophil, Cathleen Nesbitt as Doralice. A reviewer for the *Athenaeum* (13 Feb 1920) suggested that the Society "could not have made better choices" for the female lead roles (219).

Euripides and Professor Murray[1]

The appearance of Miss Sybil Thorndike some years ago as Medea at the Holborn Empire was an event which has a bearing upon three subjects of considerable interest: the drama, the present standing of Greek literature, and the importance of good contemporary translation.[2†] On the occasion on which I was present the performance was certainly a success; the audience was large, it was attentive, and its applause was long. Whether the success was due to Euripides is uncertain; whether it was due to Professor Murray is not proved;[3] but that it was in considerable measure due to Miss Thorndike there is no doubt. To have held the centre of the stage for two hours in a rôle which requires both extreme violence and restraint, a rôle which requires simple force and subtle variation; to have sustained so difficult a rôle almost without support; this was a legitimate success. The audience, or what could be seen of it from one of the cheaper seats, was serious and respectful and perhaps inclined to self-approval at having attended the performance of a Greek play; but Miss Thorndike's acting might have held almost any audience. It employed all the conventions, the theatricalities, of the modern stage; yet her personality triumphed over not only Professor Murray's verse but her own training.

The question remains whether the production was a "work of art." The rest of the cast appeared slightly ill at ease; the nurse was quite a tolerable nurse of the crone type; Jason was negative; the messenger was uncomfortable at having to make such a long speech; and the refined Dalcroze chorus had mellifluous voices which rendered their lyrics happily inaudible.[4] All this contributed toward the highbrow effect which is so depressing; and we imagine that the actors of Athens, who had to speak clearly enough for 20,000 auditors to be able to criticize the versification, would have been pelted with figs and olives had they mumbled so unintelligibly as most of this troupe. But the Greek actor spoke in his own language, and our actors were forced to speak in the language of Professor Gilbert Murray.[5†]

I do not believe, however, that such performances will do very much to rehabilitate Greek literature or our own, unless they stimulate a desire for better translations. The serious auditors, many of whom I observed to be like myself provided with Professor Murray's eighteenpenny translation,

were probably not aware that Miss Thorndike, in order to succeed as well as she did, was really engaged in a struggle against the translator's verse. She triumphed over it by attracting our attention to her expression and tone and making us neglect her words; and this, of course, was not the dramatic method of Greek acting at its best. The English and Greek languages remained where they were. But few persons realize that the Greek language and the Latin language, and, *therefore*, we say, the English language, are within our lifetime passing through a critical period. The Classics have, during the latter part of the nineteenth century and up to the present moment, lost their place as a pillar of the social and political system – such as the Established Church still is. If they are to survive, to justify themselves as literature, as an element in the European mind, as the foundation for the literature we hope to create, they are very badly in need of persons capable of expounding them. We need someone – not a member of the Church of Rome, and perhaps preferably not a member of the Church of England – to explain how vital a matter it is, if Aristotle may be said to have been a moral pilot of Europe, whether we shall or shall not drop that pilot. And we need a number of educated poets who shall at least have opinions about Greek drama, and whether it is or is not of any use to us. And it must be said that Professor Gilbert Murray is not the man for this. Greek poetry will never have the slightest vitalizing effect upon English poetry[6†] if it can only appear masquerading as a vulgar debasement of the eminently personal idiom of Swinburne. These are strong words to use against the most popular Hellenist of his time; but we must witness of Professor Murray ere we die that these things are not otherwise but thus.[7]

This is really a point of capital importance. That the most conspicuous Greek propagandist of the day should almost habitually use two words where the Greek language requires one, and where the English language will provide him with one; that he should render σκιάν by "*grey* shadow";[8] and that he should stretch the Greek brevity to fit the loose frame of William Morris, and blur the Greek lyric to the fluid haze of Swinburne;[9] these are not faults of infinitesimal insignificance. The first great speech of Medea Mr. Murray begins with:

> Women of Corinth, I am come to show
> My face, lest ye despise me . . . .[10]

We find in the Greek, ἐξῆλθον δόμων.[11] "Show my face," therefore, is Mr. Murray's gift.

This thing undreamed of, sudden from on high,
Hath sapped my soul: I dazzle where I stand,
The cup of all life shattered in my hand. . . .[12]

Again, we find that the Greek is:

ἐμοὶ δ' ἄελπτον πρᾶγμα προσπεσὸν τόδε
Ψυχὴν διέφθαρκ'· οἰχομαι δὲ καὶ βίου
Χάριν μεθεῖσα κατθανεῖν χρῄζω, φίλαι.[13]

So, here are two striking phrases which we owe to Mr. Murray; it is he who has sapped our soul and shattered the cup of all life for Euripides. And these are only random examples.

Οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλη φρὴν μιαιφονωτέρα[14]

becomes "no bloodier spirit between heaven and hell"![15] Surely we know that Professor Murray is acquainted with "Sister Helen"?[16] Professor Murray has simply interposed between Euripides and ourselves a barrier more impenetrable than the Greek language. We do not reproach him for preferring, apparently, Euripides to Aeschylus. But if he does, he should at least appreciate Euripides. And it is inconceivable that anyone with a genuine feeling for the sound of Greek verse should deliberately elect the William Morris couplet, the Swinburne lyric, as an equivalent.[17†]

As a poet, Mr. Murray is merely a very insignificant follower of the pre-Raphaelite movement. As a Hellenist, he is very much of the present day, and a very important figure in the day. This day began, in a sense, with Tylor and a few German anthropologists;[18] since then we have acquired sociology and social psychology, we have watched the clinics of Ribot and Janet, we have read books from Vienna and heard a discourse of Bergson;[19] a philosophy arose at Cambridge; social emancipation crawled abroad; our historical knowledge has of course increased; and we have a curious Freudian-social-mystical-rationalistic-higher-critical interpretation of the Classics and what used to be called the Scriptures.[20] I do not deny the very great value of all work by scientists in their own departments, the great interest also of this work in detail and in its consequences. Few books are more fascinating than those of Miss Harrison, Mr. Cornford, or Mr. Cooke, when they burrow in the origins of Greek myths and rites; M. Durkheim, with his social consciousness, and M. Levy-Bruhl, with his Bororo Indians who convince themselves that they are parroquets, are delightful writers.[21]

A number of sciences have sprung up in an almost tropical exuberance which undoubtedly excites our admiration, and the garden, not unnaturally, has come to resemble a jungle. Such men as Tylor, and Robertson Smith, and Wilhelm Wundt, who early fertilized the soil, would hardly recognize the resulting vegetation; and indeed poor Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie* was a musty relic before it was translated.[22]

All these events are useful and important in their phase, and they have sensibly affected our attitude towards the Classics; and it is this phase of classical study that Professor Murray – the friend and inspirer of Miss Jane Harrison – represents. The Greek is no longer the awe-inspiring Belvedere of Winckelmann, Goethe, and Schopenhauer, the figure of which Walter Pater and Oscar Wilde offered us a slightly debased re-edition.[23] And we realize better how different – not how much more Olympian – were the conditions of the Greek civilization from ours; and at the same time Mr. Zimmern has shown us how the Greek dealt with analogous problems.[24] Incidentally we do not believe that a good English prose style can be modelled upon Cicero, or Tacitus, or Thucydides. If Pindar bores us, we admit it; we are not certain that Sappho was *very* much greater than Catullus; we hold various opinions about Virgil; and we think more highly of Petronius than our grandfathers did.

It is to be hoped that we may be grateful to Professor Murray and his friends for what they have done, while we endeavour to neutralize Professor Murray's influence upon Greek literature[25†] and English language in his translations by making better translations. The choruses from Euripides by H. D. are, allowing for errors and even occasional omissions of difficult passages, much nearer to both Greek and English than Mr. Murray's.[26] But H. D. and the other poets of the *Poets' Translation Series* have so far done no more than pick up some of the more romantic crumbs of Greek literature; none of them has yet shown himself competent to attack the *Agamemnon*.[27] If we are to digest the heavy food of historical and scientific knowledge that we have eaten we must be prepared for much greater exertions. We need a digestion which can assimilate both Homer and Flaubert. We need a careful study of Renaissance Humanists and Translators, such as Mr. Pound has begun.[28] We need an eye which can see the past in its place with its definite differences from the present, and yet so lively that it shall be as present to us as the present. This is the creative eye; and it is because Professor Murray has no creative instinct that he leaves Euripides quite dead.

NOTES

1. As printed in *SE*; originally "Euripides and Gilbert Murray: A Performance at the Holborn Empire," *Art & Letters*, 3 (Spring 1920), 36-38, 43; retitled in *SW*. Composed after 24 Mar but before 13 May 1920 (*L1* 454).

2†. In *A&L* and *SW*: "The recent appearance of Miss Sybil Thorndyke as Medea at the Holborn Empire is an event"; spelled "Thorndyke" throughout *A&L* and *SW*.

Agnes Sybil Thorndike (1882-1976), known for her leading Shakespearean roles at the Old Vic, earned high praise for her performance as Hecuba in Murray's translation of Euripides' *The Trojan Women*, which had also played at the Holborn late in 1919. This production of Murray's 1906 translation of *Medea* opened for matinee performances at the Holborn Empire on 8 Mar 1920 and was continued at the Duke of York's Theatre from 5 to 10 Apr. See illustration 9.

3. Beginning in 1902, Gilbert Murray, a member of the Cambridge Ritualists and later Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford, helped to spur the revival of Attic drama with his series of translations of Euripides. TSE suggested earlier that Murray's translations were harmful to English verse and were composed "in the style of fifty years ago – an ideal of socialism and popular education – Greek without tears" (1.493).

4. The Dalcroze method of coordinating musical phrasing and spontaneous bodily movement was developed as an educational tool by Swiss composer Émile Jaques-Dalcroze (1865-1950), who had been lecturing and giving demonstrations regularly at Queen's Hall since Jan 1920. The chorus of this production likely resembled the one in the earlier *Trojan Women* – both were staged by Lewis Casson and choreographed by Irene Mawer – which an *Athenaeum* reviewer described as composed of "six ladies, moving in well-rehearsed Dalcroze rhythms" (31 Oct 1919, 1130).

5†. In *A&L* and *SW*: "of Professor Gilbert Murray. So that on the whole we may say that the performance was an interesting one."

6†. In *A&L*: "Greek Poetry, it must be said, will never have the slightest vitalising effect upon English Poetry"

7. TSE echoes a verse from Swinburne's *Atalanta in Calydon*, in which the Chorus concludes its accusation of God by proclaiming: "At least we witness of thee ere we die / That these things are not otherwise, but thus; / That each man in his heart sigheth, and saith, . . . All we are against thee, against thee, O God most high." He included an excerpt from this passage and remarked upon its sententiousness in "Swinburne as Poet" (183-84).

8. σκιάν: shadow. TSE quotes from *The Medea of Euripides* (line 1224), trans. Gilbert Murray (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1906), 67.

9. TSE had previously used this phrase from Part II of Tennyson's "The Princess" – "This world was once a fluid haze of light" – to refer ironically to the excessive vagaries of Victorian verse: "A careful study of the nineteenth-century poetry based on 'things real to modern man' would be interesting, beginning with Princess Ida and her fluid haze of light" (1.598).

10. *Medea* (ll. 214-15), trans. Murray, 14.

11. ἐξῆλθον δόμων: I have come out of the house. Misprinted in *SE* as δόμον; accurate in *A&L* and *SW*.

12. *Medea* (ll. 225-27), trans. Murray, 15.

13. *Trans*: "But on me this thing has fallen so unexpectedly, / It has broken my heart. I am finished. I let go / All my life's joy. My friends, I want only to die." Trans. Rex Warner. *The*

Complete Greek Tragedies, Vol III: *Euripides*. Ed. David Grene and Richmond Lattimore (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), 66.

14. *Medea* (line 266). *Trans*: "No other soul can hold so many thoughts of blood." Trans. Warner, 67.

15. Murray, 16.

16. The refrain of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's early dramatic poem "Sister Helen" (1854) repeats with slight variations the lines, "O Mother, Mary Mother, / The lonely ghost, between Hell and Heaven!"

17†. In *A&L* and *SW*: "as a just equivalent."

18. TSE's vignette of "the present day" in this paragraph recounts the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century rise of psychology and the social sciences and draws upon his work as a Harvard graduate student and his early reviews of anthropological and sociological works. He had studied the pioneering social anthropology of Edward Burnett Tylor and quoted from his *Primitive Culture* (2 vols, 1871) in a seminar paper for Josiah Royce at Harvard (1.107). German philologist and Sanskrit scholar Max Müller held a Chair at Oxford and was influential among the first generation of English social scientists, which included Tylor and Andrew Lang. Elsewhere TSE mentions Müller and Wilhelm Mannhardt as significant German influences on early anthropology (1.420, 1.670).

19. Early French clinical psychologists Théodule Armand Ribot (1839-1916) and Pierre Janet. TSE discovered Janet's work while he was in Paris in 1910-11 and wrote about it afterwards at Harvard (1.59). He heard Bergson lecture at the Collège de France during the same year and later addressed his objections in a seminar paper in Dec 1913, "[Inconsistencies in Bergson's Idealism]" (1.67).

20. TSE's satirical characterization includes an indictment of the so-called Higher Criticism, an historical approach to biblical analysis developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and influenced by rationalist philosophies.

21. Jane Ellen Harrison, Francis M. Cornford, A. B. Cook, and Murray himself were members of the Cambridge Ritualists, who held that Greek tragedy derived from primitive religious rituals and that these rituals preceded belief or doctrine. TSE discusses their work alongside that of sociologists Émile Durkheim – for whom social or "group consciousness" constitutes the origin of religion – and Lucien Lévy-Bruhl – whose *Les Fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures* (1910) relates the use of parrots in the prelogical totemism of the Bororó Indians of Brazil – in two untitled reviews of *Group Theories of Religion and the Individual* and his paper for Royce's seminar (1.106, 1.417, 1.430).

22. The insistence of early anthropologist William Robertson Smith (1846-94) on the primacy of an originary, Ur-ritual in *Religion of the Semites* (1889) influenced both Frazer and the Cambridge Ritualists. Wilhelm Max Wundt was among the founders of experimental psychology and the author of *Völkerpsychologie*, a ten-volume treatise (1900-20) which aimed to develop a scientific theory of history and culture based on laws of psychological development. TSE had reviewed Wundt's shorter *Elements of Folk Psychology* (1916; originally *Elemente der Völkerpsychologie*, 1912) for both the *International Journal of Ethics* and the *Monist*, concluding there that it was "the end, rather than the beginning, of an epoch" (1.507).

23. Winckelmann praises the spiritual artistry of the Roman copies of Greek statuary held in the Vatican's Belvedere Courtyard in his "Description of the Torso of the Hercules of Belvedere

in Rome" (1762). Goethe writes of being swept away by the Apollo Belvedere during his visit to Rome in the entry for 9 Nov 1786 in his *Italian Journey* (1816-17). And TSE recalls elsewhere Schopenhauer's admiration for the same statue in Book III of *The World as Will and Representation* (1818) (238). Pater refers to the Belvedere in "Winckelmann," the penultimate chapter of *The Renaissance*; Wilde writes of the Apollo in his 1887 review of J. P. Mahaffy's *Greek Life and Thought*.

24. Professor of International Relations at University College, Wales, Alfred Eckhard Zimmern (1879-1957) examines the "geographical and economic conditions" of ancient Greece in *The Greek Commonwealth: Politics and Economics in Fifth-Century Athens* (1911). As a former inspector of the Board of Education, Zimmern was influential in TSE's appointment as an Extension lecturer at Southall (*L1* 172).

25†. In *A&L*: "Professor Murray's pernicious influence upon Greek literature"

26. H. D.'s *Choruses from Iphigeneia in Aulis* (1915) was the third in the original six-volume Poets' Translation Series, edited by Richard Aldington and published by the Egoist Press; her enlarged version, *Choruses from Iphigeneia in Aulis and the Hippolytus of Euripides* (1919), had recently appeared as number three in the second series. TSE applauded her translation in "Classics in English" (1916) and he composed but never published a review of it around the same time (1.493, 1.497).

27. After reading this essay, Ezra Pound applauded TSE's "interment of Murray" and encouraged him "to have a shot at the *Agamemnon*." According to Pound, "He didn't. Or rather he sat on it for eight months or some longer period." *Guide to Kulchur* (London: Faber, 1938), 92. Editor Richard Aldington later responded publicly to TSE's criticism, "Since the text of the *Agamemnon* is a chaos and we were only amateurs, it would have been foolish to try. I wrote to him at once, offering to publish his version of the *Agamemnon* in the series; but the manuscript was never sent in." *Life for Life's Sake*, 144.

28. *The Egoist* had recently published Pound's five-part series on Renaissance literature and translations, "Elizabethan Classicists" (Sept 1917-Jan 1918), followed by his three articles under the title "Early Translators of Homer" (Aug-Oct 1918).

A Brief Treatise on the Criticism of Poetry[1]

The Chapbook, 2 (Mar 1920) 1-10

Anatole France, a man whose intelligence must be treated with respect, remarks somewhere that "Criticism is the last of all literary forms; it will perhaps end by absorbing them all. It is admirably adapted to a very civilised society whose memories are rich and whose traditions are already age-old. It is peculiarly suited to a curious, learned, and polished race of men. In order that it may prosper it demands more cultivation than all other literary forms."[2]

This statement appears to me both false and pernicious. The critical genius is inseparable from the creative. Not that the most "creative" genius is necessarily the best writer of criticism; but in a more general way, if a people could no longer produce an artist, it could no longer produce a critic. For if we ceased to be able to create works of art, we should certainly cease to be able to appreciate them. And, for the present generation, I think it is true to say that the conditions which may be considered to be unfavourable to the writing of good poetry are unfavourable to the writing of good criticism. During the last few years an enormous mass of verse has been printed, and an enormous mass of appreciations of this verse has also been printed; and verse and criticism are of the same quality. There are three or four poets whose verse is worth reading; there do not appear to be more than that number of good critics.

In so far as the people who write about verse are actually the same people who write verse, the coincidence is not surprising. It is fitting that poets should write about poetry; but when it is an indifferent poet writing about indifferent verse the criticism is likely to be equally indifferent. When, as poets, they have no poetic method, it is quite natural that as critics they should have no critical method. If the public which reads reviews possessed any critical faculty of its own this would not much matter. But the public has not yet learned to attach the same doubt to a review as to a report from Russia; partly, perhaps, because a poetic reputation does not appear of so much importance as a Ministerial one.

Let the public, however, ask itself why it has never heard of the poems of T. E. Hulme or of Isaac Rosenberg, and why it has heard of the poems of

Lady Precocia Pondoeuf and has seen a photograph of the nursery in which she wrote them.[3] Let it trace out the writers who are not spoken of because it is to no one's interest to speak of them, and the writers who are spoken well of because it is to no one's interest to take the trouble to disparage them; and let the public also notice, in every case, who was the publisher. It will see, in the end, that the disease of contemporary reviewing is only a form of the radical malady of journalism. Criticism is a very different thing.

There are several kinds of writing that pass under the name of criticism. There is, first, an etiolated creation. This is not worth much consideration, because it only appeals to minds so enfeebled or so lazy as to be afraid of approaching a genuine work of art face to face. Walter Pater is one example; there are numerous examples in Paris. It does not count.

There is another kind of criticism which is perfectly legitimate. This, again, is not literary or art criticism, but a kind of philosophy. If you isolate from the work of Sainte-Beuve what is pure literary criticism, you will have left out of account what is really the most valuable part.[4] You will have failed to appreciate the pattern of Sainte-Beuve's carpet, which is not literary at all.[5] Sainte-Beuve was not primarily interested in art, but in the soul and the body of man, and the varieties of clothing that the soul and the body put on. And a historian, or a philosopher, may use poetry as his data. He will have to be, of course, a man of sensitive discrimination. His work may be of the greatest importance. It is certainly of much greater importance than the work of Anatole France or Pater; it need not be of less importance than what I define as criticism of poetry. But it is a different thing. The man who is interested, narrowly interested, if you like, in poetry as an art, ought never to write about bad or indifferent poetry. The historian or the philosopher may. For he may find in such work a valuable illustrative document. And the public ought to learn to distinguish the historian and the philosopher from the reviewer and also from the critic of poetry. As it is, all of these various types are called "critics."

The third type of "critic" is the critic of poetry proper. Sainte-Beuve is the historian. Coleridge, himself a compound of philosopher, metaphysician and artist, wrote both philosophical and poetic criticism. You will find both in *Biographia Literaria*. In his lectures and notes you will find some of the best poetic criticism that has been written about the older dramatists.[6] Dryden is a poetic critic of the first rank. Aristotle, curiously enough, is more purely a poetic critic than Coleridge. He had a clearer mind than

Coleridge, and a remarkable faculty for dealing with every subject of investigation by itself.

Every form of genuine criticism is directed toward creation. The historical or the philosophical critic of poetry is criticising poetry in order to create a history or a philosophy; the poetic critic is criticising poetry in order to create poetry.

This last statement is not to be taken too literally. Rémy de Gourmont is an interesting poet, but he is, I think, more remarkable as a critic.[7] But unless he had been a poet he could not have been a critic. The critic is interested in technique – technique in the widest sense. You cannot understand a book on mathematics unless you are actively, not merely passively, a mathematician, unless you can perform operations, not merely follow them. And you cannot understand the technique of poetry unless you are to some extent capable of performing this operation. Only the person who is working on words in that way can understand their values. The philosopher who works a mathematical or physical theory into his system is certainly "criticising" the theory; but to the mathematician or physicist, occupied in further extending his theory, this philosophy is not of much use. And to the poet only the criticism of poets is useful.

We are, consequently, not to conceive of the critic as an ideal censor, a detached observer keeping disorderly poets in check. The criticism which a poet can find of use to himself is first the advice and conversation of older poets, and second, the writings of Dryden, Campion, and half a dozen other poets, and third, his own criticism of better poets than he. He can learn more from Jespersen's English Grammar than from Sainte-Beuve.[8]

Let us declare at once that there is nothing peculiar either in endowment or training to designate the critic. The critic of poetry needs the same professional equipment as the poet: the same knowledge of poetry, the same enjoyment of it, the same ear and eye, the same philology, the same general education. If any poet asks himself what writings about poetry have been of any use to him, he finds that they are almost without exception the writings of poets – Campion, Dryden, Coleridge, Gourmont, even Boileau[9] – and that almost the only exception is the man who wrote well on every subject: Aristotle.

I say again that there are a variety of points of view from which thoughtful and useful study of poetry can be made. Poetry is also a social document, and may be made use of by the historian, the moralist, the social philosopher or the psycho-analyst. Nor do I say that the critic should not

be aware of these aspects. He is only required to know what he is doing. And as poetry is primarily an art, that is to say, a means of communicating those direct feelings peculiar to art, which range from amusement to ecstacy, the first impression it should make is to the feelings of art, and the first questions it should excite are questions of art. It is a social document afterwards. And since it is as a work of art that a poem should be first discussed, the critic of contemporary verse should be competent to discuss it as a work of art. Let us now consider what is the proper behaviour for a critic when he meets with a poem that he genuinely believes to be a work of art, and whether our critics can be trusted to behave themselves properly.

I have in mind a sentence encountered recently in a literary periodical of the very highest standing – a periodical with which there is nothing to compare in *any* other country. This sentence was not in a leading article or in a review, but in a small book-notice, and a notice concerned with other poems by other writers as well. It ran, in what I believe is called diamond type, almost as follows:

> Mr. Honeydew's poem, *The Golden Hoopoe*, would give fame to any book or paper in which it appeared. It is a great poem. The song by Mr. Leadbeater is worthy of Mr. Leadbeater . . . etc.[10]

Consider the sentence "It is a great poem," and all that it implies. Assume that the critic is one for whose opinion you have vast respect: then he has told you all that you need to know. You read the poem, you become acquainted with a new work of art, and the literary periodical has served the most important purpose that literary periodicals can serve. But this never happens. Probably no one who read the notice really believed, or even entertained the thought, that the poem was a great poem. No one rose panting from the breakfast table and rushed hatless to the stationer's to procure a copy. The periodical itself did not come out with a leading article on the poem the next week. Perhaps the editor himself never noticed this little critic in his diamond type, and he too would not have believed. I could not believe either; I have never read the poem. The critic was believed by no one, incredulous eyes outstared him, and yet he was a brave little critic. For he dared to say the only sensible thing about a great poem: "It is a great poem." He was a great critic. Or else he was a very irresponsible, completely untrustworthy, poisonous little critic.

He took the honest course, the critic, if he really believed the poem was a great poem. What else is there to say? Who wants an analysis, an account

of the man and his message, his vision of life, his place as a representative of something or other, his derivations, his relation to his colleagues Mr. Leadbeater and Mr. Spooner – *before he has read the poem?* But, as a matter of fact, it cannot be done in that way. It must be hammered. And so the good critic will merely say "this is a good poem" in a hundred different ways. He will make a column of it. He will quote and quote. When he writes about someone else he will say, "Here and there we find a slight suggestion of the bitter intensity of Mr. Honeydew," or "With the inevitable exception of Mr. Honeydew," or a million such phrases. He will persuade the amiable Mrs. Saffron Walden to write a little article about Honeydew.[11] The people who read Mrs. Walden's article will not read the poems, but they will be prepared to be impressed when they read another reference to Honeydew next week. Honeydew gets to know a few writers, and they will from time to time mention him. And after a time some of the important critics – the critics on important papers – will come to accept Honeydew. Not that they will *praise* him. But they will say, "The bizarre work of Mr. Honeydew," "The acknowledged leader of the Febrilist school of younger writers, Mr. Honeydew." No one will have praised him except the Good Critic and Mrs. Walden and a few private people with no influence. But he is all the safer for that: he escapes malice. Honeydew must not make himself too conspicuous, or he will sink to a depth at which even the diamond criticism will seem to be fame. He merely wants such degree of notoriety and such number of editions that the few intelligent people in each generation will be likely to come across his work. And in 100 years there will, perhaps, be popular lectures on English literature "from Chaucer to Honeydew."

So great is the value of good criticism, which is discreet advertisement.

I do not assert, by any means, that the only function of criticism is to advertise good poetry. But it cannot too often be insisted that the purpose – not of writing poetry, but of publishing it – should be primarily to give pleasure; and that the purpose for which we suppose reviewing was divinely intended was primarily to indicate such works as can give the best pleasure to the people who otherwise may fail to hear of their existence. This is the purpose, I say, not of criticism, but of reviewing; for criticism and reviewing are not to be confused. Reviewing, if it is to be done at all, should be done by critics, but critics have other things to do as well. Now the point at which a piece of writing ceases to be a review and becomes a critical article is difficult to determine. But if we isolate reviewing from criticism its only

proper motive is to call attention to something good and new. And this is exactly the motive which least often animates the reviewer. That it should be so is not wholly the reviewer's fault. For reviewing is, unfortunately, a means of livelihood; though it is known to be one of the most corrupting, degrading, and badly-paid means of livelihood that a writing man can ply. The reviewers are merely the lowest wage-slaves in the modern literary system. Many intelligent men find themselves in this condition; it is part of the social organisation or disorganisation that writers who have honest work of their own to do find that this is the only work for which they can be paid. Consequently, it is hardly to be expected that the reviewer, unless he has become so depraved as to have no other function, should enjoy reviewing. From the point of view of any man of the slightest intellect or taste, there is not enough good verse to occupy a reviewer one week out of the year. There is not enough pernicious work worth attacking to occupy him another week. So that twenty-five twenty-sixths of the reviewer's time must be occupied with books that are perfectly colourless. And the dilemma is this: either a reviewer is a bad writer and bad critic, and he ought not to be allowed to intervene between books and the public; or he is a good writer and good critic, and therefore ought not to be occupied in writing about inferior books.

The other apparent dilemma is this: that if books of poetry are not reviewed, you must find some other way of introducing them to the public. If some other way be possible, the opportunity for criticism will if anything be greater, for it is the reviewer who kills the critic. And the harm done by the review-system is not only to the critic, not only to the public, but to the critic, the public, and the poet at once. In advance of the book comes always something which is not merely a statement that there is a good book to be read, and which is not, on the other hand, to be taken as criticism, since to read *criticism* without having already read the book criticised is meaningless. A poet may legitimately take pleasure in his work in three ways. He may have the solitary joy of expression, of having turned his material into a work of art. He may have the pleasure of being enjoyed by a few people whose taste he respects and who, he believes, have more or less understood the poem. And he may have the satisfaction, equally legitimate, of having given entertainment, and the pleasure of which they are capable, to a large number of people who have not understood him at all. As for the review, every one is tickled by a "good review." But it is unimportant. Yet, as few writers of verse have so great conviction of the value of their work as to be

indifferent to the pleasure they give others, and as in any case it is a pleasure to give pleasure to others, and as a poet only knows of the pleasure he gives others by what is written about him in print, the review comes to appear important. And the extraordinary result is that the greater number of poetry books are written, I am sure, only in order to be reviewed. The "good review" replaces, in the writer's mind, the pleasure to be given to the public. The books are born, reviewed, and die. I do not know who reads them; I never see anyone or hear of anyone reading them. Some people glance at them. But the book never reaches the public in a *pure* state. We are so saturated in the review spirit that we are satisfied to read about books; in consequence, we are merely – well-informed. A few rebellious souls complain that we have too much criticism, and not enough "creation." But we have neither criticism nor creation.

If it were only possible first to abate this nuisance of reviewing, we might hope for some improvement in the condition of verse. If it were more difficult for young poets to spring into brief and meaningless notoriety, they might be more self-critical. There should be no reviewing of poetry in daily newspapers. In the periodicals which appear less frequently, no work should be discussed except from one of the several critical points of view approved: the historical, the philosophical, the expert-professional. From the last point of view, only the absolutely first-rate should be discussed at all. If the several legitimate types of criticism were recognised, and the public and the critic taught to distinguish between them, we might have more good criticism of each kind, where now there are only two or three critics who are not utterly confused about their own intentions. Let us come to look back upon reviewing as a barbarous practice of a half-civilised age. Let private presses multiply, and the advertisements of the great publishing houses be reduced in size. Let small books of new poets be circulated first among a private audience of the two hundred people who are most likely to be interested in them. The book, the price, and the address of the publisher, could be mentioned in the literary periodical. There is a great deal for these periodicals to do besides reviewing. If "critical journalism" is an activity quite apart from creative activity, if critics are a race apart from artists who hold the artist's destiny in their hands, both criticism and art perish. Let the practitioners of any art or of several arts who have a sufficient community of interests and standards publish their conversation, their theories and their opinions in periodicals of their own. They should not be afraid of forming "cliques," if their cliques are professional and not

personal. The friction will be stimulating. Certainly there is no more useful criticism and no more precious praise for a poet than that of another poet:

> Fu miglior fabbro del parlar materno . . .
> e lascia dir gli stolti. . . .[12]

If we are really utterly sundered in spirit from the Pall Mall clubs, the country houses, and the provincial study-circles, it is a pity that we should have to depend upon them for support. If they purchase our works as a result of reviews in the dignified Press, and I am not sure that they do, they ought to be aware of the difference between reviewing and criticism, to be aware that a review is not a complete substitute for feeling and thinking on their part, and that good criticism is something which must itself be criticised by the reader.

How the man of letters is to be supported if he does not write reviews is an important social problem of which I have no solution to offer.

You will never get good criticism either from the professional reviewer or from the superior dilettante who practises nothing. There is room for aesthetics, for philosophy, for history, for social analysis, and for the *conversation* of men who are reflecting, from time to time, upon the art which they practise. All of these forms of mental exercise have points of immediate application to the present moment, and it is when in some pertinent relation to the present moment that they are peculiarly suitable for periodical writing. A critical periodical, or the critical part of a periodical, is one drawing-room as a substitute for a thousand drawing-rooms, but it at least pretends to differ in that the people who talk in it are supposed to be those most fitted to do the talking. But it is of more significance that a poet should be discussed passionately in one intelligent drawing-room than in a dozen mediocre reviews – and a better prognostic of his permanence.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. This essay is the first of TSE's contributions to editor Harold Monro's *The Chapbook* (1919-25), which TSE called "*sui generis*" and therefore "an extremely useful periodical for any writer to be able to contribute to" (*L1* 471). It appeared in a special issue titled "Three Critical Essays on Modern English Poetry (By T. S. Eliot, Aldous Huxley, and F. S. Flint)." A draft was finished by 22 Feb and revised at Monro's request by 5 Mar (*L1* 449). TSE wrote to Sidney Schiff on 24 Mar that it was "written hastily and spasmodically over considerable time. All I can say is that it contains a few ideas which I want to make better use of later" (*L1* 455).

2. Anatole France, from the preface to *La Vie littéraire* (4 vols, 1888-92); *On Life & Letters*, trans. A. W. Evans (London: John Lane, 1911), ix; *read*: "the last in date of all literary forms"; TSE found this passage (quoted exactly as he reproduces it here) in the *Dial* (Feb 1920, 267-68), in a review by Winthrop Parkhurst.

3. Both T. E. Hulme and Isaac Rosenberg (1890-1918) were killed in World War I. Hulme, whom TSE regarded as "a really great poet," had published five poems on 25 Jan 1912 in the *New Age* under the title "The Complete Poetical Works of T. E. Hulme," reprinted in Pound's 1912 *Ripostes* (*L1* 371). Rosenberg, whom TSE later called "the most remarkable of the British poets killed in that war," had published two pamphlets of verse and a play before his death in Apr 1918 (*TCC* 59). The name of TSE's fictional nursery-room poet incorporates a pun on the French for "to lay an egg" (*pondre* + *oeuf*).

4. TSE had previously used the work of Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve as a representative of "historical criticism," which is "not of *direct* significance for the living worker, nor is it directly concerned with aesthetic problems." He owned a complete set of Sainte-Beuve's seven-volume *Port Royal*.

5. Cf. Henry James's "The Figure in the Carpet" (1896): "Vereker's secret, my dear man – the general intention of his books: the string the pearls were strung on, the buried treasure, the figure in the carpet." *Embarrassments* (London: Heinemann, 1896), 63.

6. TSE later suggested in "Experiment in Criticism" (*Bookman*, 70 [Nov 1929]) that Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* (1817), with its combination of autobiography, philosophy, and aesthetics, was "a freakish phenomenon . . . one of the wisest and silliest, the most exciting and most exasperating book of criticism ever written" (227). He refers also to Coleridge's *Lectures and Notes upon Shakespeare and Other English Poets* (1883). Coleridge's notes on Shakespeare are marked in TSE's copy, from his undergraduate years, of *The Complete Works of Coleridge* (Macmillan, 1907) (Houghton). TSE also owned a copy of Coleridge's *Lectures on Shakespeare and other Dramatists* (London: Routledge, 1913).

7. TSE was introduced to Gourmont's critical treatise, *Le Problème du style*, by Pound, who was translating the French poet's aphorisms for the *Dial*, where they appeared as *Dust for Sparrows* beginning in Sept 1920. TSE later admitted that his early criticism was written "under the influence of Ezra Pound's enthusiasm for Remy de Gourmont" (*UPUC* 10).

8. *A Modern English Grammar on Historical Principles* (7 vols, 1909-49), by Danish linguist Otto Jespersen (1860-1943). Beginning in the second volume (1909), Jespersen included hundreds of exemplary quotations from illustrious English authors whom he believed gave "a striking, and at the same time natural, expression to some characteristic thought" (vi).

9. All of whom were known in part for their treatises on the art of poetry, including Dryden in "Of Dramatic Poesy," Coleridge in the *Biographia Literaria*, Gourmont in *Le Problème du style*, and French neoclassical poet Nicholas Boileau-Despréaux (1636-1711) in *L'Art poétique* (1674). Editor Harold Monro took issue with this passage in a letter to TSE on 5 Mar: "I disagree of course with the 'Campion, Dryden, Coleridge, Gourmont' statements and with some other things – with which, probably, I am meant to disagree." TSE replied: "I don't understand your suggestion that you were 'meant to disagree' with anything – I do not know what your opinions are, and I certainly should not choose this opportunity for attacking them if I did" (*L1* 449).

10. TSE modifies an excerpt from Harold Child's brief, anonymous review of *The London Mercury* in the *TLS* (1 Jan 1920): "Mr. Martin Armstrong's poem, 'The Buzzards,' would give fame to any book or paper in which it appeared. It is a great poem. The song by Flecker is worthy of Flecker; Mr. J. C. Squire's long poem on 'The Moon' not only fascinates by its metrical scheme and achievements, but charms with what it says and suggests" (10). Identified by Peter White, "'Tradition and the Individual Talent' Revisited,"*Review of English Studies,* 58 (2007), 364-92.

11. The name of TSE's fictional reviewer is likely borrowed from Thomas Nashe's *Have with You to Saffron Walden* (1596), a satirical attack on the pedant and disappointed academic Gabriel Harvey, whose failures as a writer Nashe lampoons and whose character ultimately returns in shame and obscurity to his birthplace in Saffron Walden, Essex. TSE later wrote of Nashe in "The Elizabethan Grub Street" (1929): "for invective, I think that *Have with You to Saffron Walden* . . . is the top of his form."

12. *Purgatorio* XXVI.117, 119. *Trans*: "[he] was a better craftsman of the mother tongue . . . and let fools talk" (*DC2* 329, 331). The shade of poet Guido Guinizelli refers to his predecessor, Arnaut Daniel; TSE adapted Guinizelli's praise in the dedication to *The Waste Land*, "For Ezra Pound / *il miglior fabbro*" (*CPP* 37), the earliest version of which he inscribed in his presentation copy (Texas) of the first edition to Pound – "for E. P. miglior fabbro from T. S. E. Jan. 1923" – though the formal dedication first appeared in print in *Poems 1909-1925*.

Modern Tendencies in Poetry[1]

Shama'a, 1 (Apr 1920) 9-18

A popular theme of Extension lecturers and the like is the Relation of Poetry to Life. Poetry has been interrogated a good many times by these conscientious educators, who have exerted considerable ventriloqual ingenuity in the replies they have pretended to extract from it. But if Life, in the form of forty sweating millions in these islands, were forced to discourse upon its Relation to Poetry, what shuffling answer could it make? You produce half a dozen, at most, of respectable poets in a generation; you produce twenty or thirty people who are capable of discovering that these poets are good; a hundred people who can see that they are good when somebody else points it out; a thousand who will admire out of respect for others' opinion; and the rest who will, eventually, believe what they are told. This was the case with dead poets; and yet the contemporary poet is advised that he ought to make a wider appeal, that he ought not to require of his public, erudition – that is, trained sensibility or subtlety of feeling – that is, concentrated attention. Or else he is cherished by a few *because* of his narrow appeal. The good poet, if he has a regular income, can survive; he will always manage to accomplish something; the tendency of good poets is to write good poetry, and this is a modern as well as an ancient tendency. But the "tendency of poetry" depends on the audience as well. So, if you wish to ask what we are likely to get, in the way of poetry, I must ask what you will do with it when you get it; ignore it, or make it a coterie pet, or allow it something like the activity which the plays of Shakespeare and the songs of Dr. Thomas Campion enjoyed in their time.

Having thus disposed of half of the responsibility, my business is, I believe, to endeavour to determine what is meant by "modern" poetry, and to trace, among the variety of currents and eddies, what is the line of true poetry, as distinguished from mere novelties. How are we to decide what is really new? In what sense must a poet be "of his time" to be really a good poet?

In answering these questions it is useful, not to compare poetry to science, but to start out with the view that poetry *is* a science. The relation of art and science has recently been examined on several occasions in the *Athenaeum*, but I do not think that I am attacking it from quite the same

point of view as either of the writers.[2] What I shall say you may take provisionally as only analogies. But to say that poetry is a science is in the first place to say that poetry is a serious study, a life-time's work. It is impossible to say how far public opinion has been affected by the fact that the tendency of Victorian poetry was determined by the influence of two poets – Shelley and Keats – who died young and rather romantically; at any rate poetry is apt to be associated with youth and youthful inspiration, rather than with steady toil, it is also associated with the charm of youthful personality.[3] But if we take poetry seriously as a work and not as the mere ebullition of a personality, we shall find that the poet's training and equipment is parallel to the training and equipment of the scientist; we find that his purpose is parallel; and that his attitude toward his work is parallel. First, his equipment: his knowledge of what has been done in the past. This is germane to the question of modern tendency; for it is only in relation to the past that anything is new.

It is as necessary – and this reveals the great defect of much contemporary verse – for the poet to study previous poetry as for the scientist to know the history of his science, and what has been accomplished up to date. Take the adolescent poet when he begins to write. He does not begin with a scientific spirit or much knowledge of his subject. His impulse is ejaculatory and imitative. He desires to extrude from himself some pressing and restless feelings in which he has become interested, and the shape they assume is decided by one or two admirations. These feelings, brought into the world tumultuously, respond to some facts in life or they do not. The first shock the poet has is when he discovers that something new to him and to him unique is valueless because it has already been better said by someone else. He at first looked at his own work by itself, and was not bothered by its resemblance to its models. He discovers that his poem must have a meaning apart from its meaning to him; that further, it must [be] like the poems of the past in [the] permanent characteristics of poetry, and different from them in the things that can change. And as he matures, he becomes more like his predecessors, and more different from them. He becomes more *conscious* of them. And in studying the works of his predecessors he perceives how, in art as in science, everything that one generation does is a development upon the work of the past, which would not be possible if the past generations had not done their work.

When you study the life's work of a great scientist, if you have enough knowledge of the subject to study it at all, you recognise that the man

accomplished what he did not through a desire to express his personality, but by a complete surrender of himself to the work in which he was absorbed. He is continuing a work which will be continued after him. The great scientist submerges himself in what he has to do, forgets himself. But if he is a great scientist there will be – I believe scientists will corroborate this statement, a cachet of the man all over it. No one else could have drawn those inferences, constructed those demonstrations, seen those relations. His personality has not been lost, but has gone, all the important part of it, into the work. Yet the inferences seem to have drawn themselves, the demonstrations constructed themselves, the relations flown into each other's arms; but without him it would not have happened. There is this same inevitability and impersonality about the work of a great poet. The elements were there to be combined, the work to be done; the great poet is prolonging the work of the people who preceded him, and laying out the work for those who follow him; the greater the poet, the more evident his hand in every line, and the more elusive his personality.

This analogy illustrates two points of resemblance, or two aspects of the same resemblance, between the scientist and the poet. Great poetry is something into which personality is completely *déversée*,[4] and it is something which is a part of Poetry. Not only do all great poets seem to have something in common, but they seem like parts of one Mind, working under different conditions and at different times.

The mature poet, in the operations of his mind, works like the chemist. He is aware, not that he wants to say something, but that there is something to be said. He is aware of a great number and variety of elements which can be combined into new and important compounds; his training has given him knowledge of what the elements have been made to do already, and has made him exceptionally sensitive to what they can be made to do. He is in tune for perceiving new relations, as the scientist is. And just as a scientist may excel more in the analytic, the observing, or the constructive work of science, so a poet may be more gifted either in analysis or in construction. But for either or for both, his is a trained sensibility.

He possesses a variety of feelings to make use of. But in his operation upon them, he is not particularly interested in them because they are *his* feelings; it is only as he is able to regard these feelings as existing apart from him, just as apart as the chemical from the chemist, that he can work them into art. What constitutes the terrible authenticity of Villon's testaments is that he *saw* his feelings, watched them, as coldly as an astronomer watches

a comet; and without this cold and scientific observation he could never have given his feelings their permanent intensity.[5]

The personality of the poet or of the artist operates in a way which I offer in a metaphor. The material civilisation of a country is sometimes measured by the amount of sulphuric acid it uses.[6] England and Germany use the most sulphuric acid. Now, for the production of this acid, as of many other important products of industrial chemistry, it is necessary to combine two gases which, if simply placed in the same vessel will not mix. Introduce a bit of platinum, and the combination takes place. The platinum does not enter into the combination, but merely looks on. The operation is called, I believe, catalysis, and the platinum, a catalyst. The artist's mind is a catalyst; it looks on; the gases may have been part of his mind but they are not part of it at the time when he is effecting them to join in exactly that way.

Here a difficulty interposes itself: we know, or think we know, what is meant by progress in science; but is there the same kind of progress in poetry – is there any progress in poetry? I have been leading up to this difficulty. We want to know whether the identity, or analogy, between science and poetry is close enough to throw any light on the changes in poetry from time to time. For we object at once that while past work in science appears of value only because of its being the basis of present conclusions and future discoveries, past poetry retains a permanent value equal and alongside of contemporary and future work. I think that at least this obstacle might be attenuated, from both sides; but it is not at present pertinent to make more than one point. The life of our "heritage" of literature is dependent upon the continuance of literature.[7] If you imagine yourselves suddenly deprived of your personal present, of all possibility of action, reduced in consciousness to the memories of everything up to the present, these memories, this existence which would be merely the totality of memories, would be meaningless and flat, even if it *could* continue to exist. If suddenly all power of producing more poetry were withdrawn from the race, if we knew that for poetry we should have to turn always to what already existed, I think that past poetry would become meaningless. For the capacity of appreciating poetry is inseparable from the power of producing it, it is poets themselves who can best appreciate poetry. Life is always turned toward creation; the present only, keeps the past alive. Hence the importance, to any generation, of the poetry that its representatives produce. Most people can only create in generic and not in individual

ways; but they can, if they are alive to the artistic creation which is taking place as they live, enter into the pleasure of the creation of the artist. A contemporary, even if he be no more than a Silius Italicus, has an importance that the dead have not.[8]

To insist upon the importance of the present moment, in art, is not to make the claim that we are more "civilised" than previous ages. It is simply that we have had more experience, more history, more memory.

It is unnecessary to take your time to run over the whole history of Poetry from this point of view, and show what each poet has discovered or invented and added to poetry. The history of poetry is by no means a series of triumphant discoveries; in England particularly, it has been very largely a history of experiments that have failed, of successful experiments that have been overlooked, and of men trying to do something else than that for which they were fitted. The greater part of Victorian poetry was a *piétinement sur place*.[9] The one Victorian poet whom our contemporary can study with much profit is Browning. Otherwise, almost all of the interesting developments in poetry are due to Frenchmen: Baudelaire, Gautier, Mallarmé, Laforgue, Corbière, Rimbaud.

It is curious that these men, who have so strongly influenced our contemporaries, should have impressed themselves upon us as eminently *hommes de métier*.[10] Some of them lived as romantic or pathetic lives as any of our young men of the nineties. But [an] Ernest Dowson,[11†] like a Lionel Johnson, is at heart a conservative, putting all his romance into his life: England has been plagued with poets of this type.[12] The Frenchmen of whom I speak were very seriously occupied with the problem of finding a sincere idiom. Baudelaire more often failed than succeeded, there is nothing permanently interesting about his diabolism; his form is often absurdly antiquated. He is a poet for the poet to study, rather than for the public to read.

The influence of Laforgue, and to a less degree of Rimbaud, has been so great that it is necessary to pass some criticism upon these poets in dealing with contemporary English verse. When I discovered Jules Laforgue, ten years ago, he gave me the same revelation which I imagine he has given to other people before and since: that is, he showed how much more use poetry could make of contemporary ideas and feelings, of the emotional quality of contemporary ideas, than one had supposed. Browning, at his best, for example in "Bishop Blougram's Apology," had done as much; and Browning's poetry is much greater poetry.[13] But the development of

Browning had been such as to conceal from us some of the implications of his work. He had begun as a disciple of Shelley, and emerged from this into a developed mature impersonal stage: his *adolescence* had not been so important as Laforgue's. It is easier for a young poet to understand and to profit by the work of another young poet, when it is good, than from the work of a mature poet. I am no longer of the opinion that Laforgue, at the stage which he had reached at his death, was a great poet; I can see sentimentalism, absorption in himself, lack of balance. But in Laforgue there was a young man who was generally intelligent, critical, interested in art, science and philosophy, and always himself: that is, every mental occupation had its own precise emotional state, which Laforgue was quick to discover and curious to analyse. So Laforgue has been more *important*, as a laboratory study for the young poet, than either Rimbaud or Corbière. For their work, though always personal in the right sense, is either indifferent or mature. At their best, they present much more solid achievement than Laforgue. Rimbaud's *Cabaret Vert* is as solid and objective as the best of Racine;[14] Corbière's *Rhapsode Foraine* is as substantial in its way as Villon; when he describes the procession of mendicants and cripples to the shrine of the Virgin, and says:

> Là, ce tronc d'homme où croît l'ulcère,
> Contre un tronc d'arbre où croît le gui[15]

the phrase burns itself in like the *cotto aspetto* of Dante's Brunetto Latini.[16] But on young poets, the influence of Laforgue is much stronger, and so far as it goes, a very good influence.

I think that the attention drawn to these French poets has been a very good thing for English verse. I think that the best of the younger poets today realise that it is impossible to ignore the discoveries of foreign poets, just as it is impossible for a good scientist to ignore what is going on abroad. So far as I can see, there is no poetry being written in France at present which is making any contribution whatever to the development of poetry; almost none of it is even readable. An infatuation with the French, therefore, would be as fatal as our natural insularity.

There is one other French influence, which, though it has not been powerful here, has been beneficial. That is Mallarmé. What Mallarmé had to say is not so important or interesting as what the poets previously mentioned had to say, but he called attention to the fact the actual writing of poetry, the accidence and syntax, is a very difficult part of the problem.

Mallarmé gets his modernity, his sincerity, simply by close attention to the actual writing.[17] The influence of an art like Mallarmé's, upon later poetry, is comparable to the influence of abstract painting: whatever its actual value, whether it is a higher or lower form, or whether it is merely a laboratory experiment, it is bound to have a cleansing and purifying effect, to recall the attention of the intelligent to essential problems of form.

This influence has been reinforced, within the last ten years, by studies which several of the better poets, largely under the leadership of Mr. Ezra Pound, have pursued in various foreign literatures. Our professional appreciation of the technical merits of poetry in living and dead languages has been sharpened, and with it our appreciation of the particular capacities of English. And we have begun to realise that English is a language of peculiar resources and peculiar difficulties in writing. For it contains more diverse elements than any other. If you take up Anglo-Saxon, or a Scandinavian language or old German, you will find qualities in those languages which English holds in suspense; and you will also find in Latin and in the Latin languages qualities which can be partly reproduced in English: the problem is how to make use of all these Elements, to refer continually to the sources, and at the same time make a vehicle adequate for the expression of any modern thought or emotion.

I have, up to this point, indicated what I believe to be the attitude and the equipment of the modern poet. His attitude will be at least *analogous* to that of the scientist: and he will include the analytical interest, the interest of curiosity, that is the romantic element, and constructive interest, that is the classical element. To his interests there is no definite bound, either in the study of technique, or in the investigation of feelings, sensations, emotions, and their possible chemical combinations. He may be perceptive of any or all of the ingredients in the modern world, scientific, historical, political, philosophical, provided that what he manipulates is the emotional or feeling co-efficients of these subjects in the human mind.

We now introduce our poet into contemporary literary society; among a crowd of some hundreds of bad poets. In his progress in a direct line he will find himself between two bodies of loiterers, more or less obstructing the path, and within reach of a sharp impact from the point of his right and left elbow respectively. What are these two groups? I do not propose to compile a list of names: for in the first place some of the individuals belong at times to one group and at times to the other, which is confusing; and in the second place some of these people have a quantity of good in them, and

it is no good giving a good dog a bad name. And in the third place there are many technical labels about, which represent what are from one point of view groups, and this would be confusing; for you will not find all the vers-librists on one side of the corridor and the other people on the other. There is plenty of musty verse concealed under *vers libre*, and *vers libre* itself is merely a collective name for a number of forms which a few performers of special aptitudes can do well, and which it is very easy to do badly; and on the other hand some of the best verse is being done in very old forms. Ten years ago, five years ago, *vers libre* might have been used as a designation for most of the more intelligent younger people, but not now. So I can only distinguish the two groups by two kinds of vice: the Emotional, and the Unemotional. The first we have had with us for a long time, the second is more recent, more representative of our time, and pathologically, more interesting. Let us take up the first.

The fault of this kind of poetry is apparent in the verse of writers who are not obviously of the hero type. Any poet who believes that an emphatic assertion of any emotion which he has felt is poetry, belongs on this side of the corridor. An emotion must be, in some way, a new emotion: it must be a new tone given to an assemblage of objects or a tone given to a new assemblage of objects. The poet's "emotion" must always be in such close relation to objects that when he sets the objects before you, you "get" the emotion. He must appeal to your senses. The emotion is the resultant activity of the combination of what are ultimately sense-data. I did not mean to refer to any poet, but I must read one poem in order to illustrate the fault in a very small way.

I hear a sudden cry of pain!
        There is a rabbit in a snare:
Now I hear the cry again,
        But I cannot tell from where.

But I cannot tell from where
        He is calling out for aid;
Crying on the frightened air,
        Making everything afraid.[18]

And so on. This poet, in a neat *pantoum*, has endeavoured to give the emotion supervening on a certain combination: a rabbit and a snare. But instead of *making* the cry make everything afraid, he tells you that it does.

He gives you some *idea* of what he means, but the catharsis, the pity and terror, he means to produce from the association of a rabbit and a snare, is no more inevitable a result than the thought of rabbit-pie.

There are writers much more modern, and trying to do something much more difficult and interesting than this, whose weakness is at bottom the same. They wish to evoke an emotion for which they have not found the sensory equivalent. They may *feel* the emotion, but you cannot put mere feelings into language; the thing is to *cease to feel* the emotion, to *see* it as the objective equivalent for it. And no matter how much more subtle or modern the emotion is than our rabbit,[19†] you must find the formula for it. We might almost work out the James-Lange theory of emotion for poetry: an emotion *is* the physical equivalent.[20] Only, in poetry, some very small event, a dropping of a book, a turning toward the door, a silence, may give the emotion for the literary purpose.

You will find that many of the second rate poets are second rate because of this attempt to deal with emotions direct instead of through the senses. But now, on the other side of the hall, we see a number of poets engaged in a different, and perhaps much more deliberate pursuit. They aim to deal with the senses, and to dispense with emotion altogether. These are much more formidable people, and they are easier to confuse with the people who are doing really good work. For some good poets have produced their emotion by a method so austerely sensationalistic as to obscure, from the careless reader, the fact that there was any emotion to be presented at all. But our friends of whom I am speaking have a terror of emotion. This fear of sentiment is so characteristic of the present time that it must have a name: and I shall call it *dadaism*. I know no more of *les dadaistes*[21†] proper than that M. Tristan Tzara has sent me his book of verse, published by the collection dada, Zurich. Here is a sample of M. Tzara's verse:

Le géant blanc lépreux du paysage

Le sel se groupe en constellation
D'oiseaux sur la tumeur d'ouate

Dans ses poumons les astéries et
Les punaises se balancent
Les microbes se cristallisent en
Palmiers de muscles balançoires
Bonjour sans cigarette tzantzantza

Ganga
Bouzdouc zdouc nfoùnfa mbaah[22]

This is quite different from our rabbit. Possibly M. Tzara is merely pulling our leg, for he is a clever man. But there is some significance in his even thinking that he can pull our leg in this way. For this kind of verse is the *reductio ad absurdum* of a certain tendency. It is the tendency of people of intelligence who have thought about art to the point of having become cynical about it, and of people who follow them without having thought about it at all. The end of this kind of aesthetic interest is to find in art not pleasure, but amusement. The adjectives to be applied to any work of art are "amusing," or "tiresome"; it must amuse you, or it will bore you; if it amuses you, it is charming.

There are in existence a number of quite amusing works of art and poetry, which can be enrolled under the ensign of dadaism. It is wholly unconstructive. It is in the end, unscientific. It is no more art than a postage stamp album. It prefers in fact, things which are not art, because the sensation of enjoying something ugly is more amusing than the worn out enjoyment of something beautiful. It is unscientific, because the interest in mere data is not a scientific interest at all, and in the end, if we pursue only sensation, we shall cease to have even sensation. It is essentially an interest outside of art, and one which any expression in language at all must cease to satisfy. Its satisfaction will not be in poetry at all, but in the ballet.

I have some very kind things to say of the ballet, but I am compelled to speak of it first in this unpleasant connection. For the ballet, with the immense and important development it has recently had, has certainly lost some of the formal beauty of the older ballet, which depended more on pure technical excellence of dancing.[23] It has become a tremendous appeal to the senses, without any emotion whatever.

This leads me back to the poet, who is neither an emotionalist nor a sensationalist, who has been all this while in conversation with the other artists, with a few scientists, and with Aristotle in a corner of the room. The ballet has done this much good. It has made us aware that we *can* pass an evening in a theatre and have some intense experience, even if it is not a purely artistic one. We are not going to accept, after that, being bored for three hours under the pretence of the art of the drama; whether it be a social play, a comedy, or the poor old "poetic drama." As for the stage, we are aware that it is merely a platform arranged in such a way that a number

of people can see and hear performers who are hired to recite other people's words, or to go through motions devised for them to go through, for any purpose whatever. It might be used for some sort of art as well. We must keep in mind that what the artist wants, besides a livelihood, is primarily that he shall continue to give enjoyment to a few scattered and exceptional and lonely people long after he is dead. But art has a social as well as an individual use; and that, as I said, is your affair rather than the artist's or poet's. The pleasure I get from *Hamlet* or *Measure for Measure* I can get better in my library than from going to the Old Vic and coming home in the Tube; but if I had been a contemporary of Shakespeare's, I think I should have gone to the playhouse when the flag was up, and had my solitary pleasure as well.

As for the vast number of people who write verse, it does not matter; though they would probably do better, some of them, if they were set some definite job to do. But the poet whom I have represented to you – whom I have drawn, of course, rather larger than life – with his great equipment: he has *something* to offer, which the most intelligent, sensitive and diligent of his admirers a hundred years hence must miss, and which his contemporary public, far less intelligent, sensitive, and diligent, can have: that is his contemporaneity. He is not, my poet, altogether a pleasant character. He is a bit scarred about the ears, and the bridge of his nose is broken; he is used to picking up a living by means which people with an income from a variety of safe investments will despise; and his expression, in consequence, mixes the panther and the fox, Thersites and the radiant Apollo.[24] I must say for myself, lest I should be misunderstood, that I am not talking about myself, or applying to be employed in writing ballets, masques, interludes, cinema scenarios, epithalamia, funeral odes, Napoleons, Abraham Lincolns, or receptions to the Prime Minister of New South Wales. I merely throw out a suggestion against the future.[25]

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. This essay originated as a lecture that TSE delivered on 28 Oct 1919 in the Conference Hall, Westminster, under the auspices of the Arts League of Service, an organization founded in Apr 1919 to "bring the Arts into Everyday Life" and to "establish a closer bond between the Community and the Artist," as its letterhead states. The League advertised the lecture in its 1919 *Bulletin*: "T. S. Eliot, whose first book, *Prufrock*, was one of the events in poetry during the last five years, and whose critical articles in the *Athenaeum* and elsewhere are causing so much interest, is also perfectly fitted to give an account of poetry in English at the present day." The

lecture was the second of four in a series titled "Modern Tendencies in Art," which also included Wyndham Lewis on painting (22 Oct), Margaret Morris on dance (12 Nov), and Eugene Goosens on music (27 Nov). TSE told his mother on 10 Nov that there were roughly three hundred in attendance, and that the chairman, Laurence Binyon, attempted to "refute – or at least deny – everything he thought I would say . . . It took me a long time to prepare the lecture. I have sent it off to the Secretary of the Arts League of Service, who wants it for a Review in India" (*L1* 416). TSE planned to "expand and continue this lecture for a small book," tentatively titled *The Art of Poetry*, which was promised for spring publication by the Egoist Press in the final issue of *The Egoist* (Dec 1919) and advertised in the 1920 *Bulletin* of the Arts League of Service before he abandoned the prospect in favor of *The Sacred Wood* (*L1* 413). The lecture was printed in *Shama'a* with numerous typographical errors that have been editorially corrected here.

2. Several articles by scientific journalist and deputy editor of the *Athenaeum* J. W. N. Sullivan – including "The Place of Science" (11 Apr 1919) and "The Justification of the Scientific Method" (2 May) – had recently provoked a series of responses from Roger Fry (6 June), I. A. Richards (27 June), and H. W. Crundell (4 July), all under the title "Art and Science." In a follow-up essay, "Science and Personality" (18 July), Sullivan argued that science "rests on the obliteration of the personality, whereas a cursory reading assures us that art is an emphasis and expression of individuality"; "personality," he concludes, "is much less obtrusive in the sciences than in the arts" (624).

3. Percy Bysshe Shelley was twenty-nine when he drowned in a boating accident near his home in the Italian coastal town of San Terenzo in 1822. John Keats died, after a protracted struggle with tuberculosis and a difficult journey to Italy, in Rome in 1821 at age twenty-five.

4. *déversée*: poured out.

5. TSE refers to Villon's *Le Lais*, also known as *Le Petit Testament* or *Le Premier Testament* (1456), and *Le Testament*, also known as *Le Grand Testament* or *Le Testament second* (1461), both long poems that lament the author's fallen state and personal misfortune and that bequeath his real and imaginary possessions to friends and enemies alike.

6. German chemist Justus von Liebig claimed in his *Familiar Letters on Chemistry* (New York: D. Appleton, 1843): "we may judge, with great accuracy, of the commercial prosperity of a country from the amount of sulphuric acid it consumes" (40). And Robert Kennedy Duncan suggested in *The Chemistry of Commerce* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1907) that "the amount of sulphuric acid availed of by a country is a very fair measure of its civilization" (32).

7. TSE alludes to the debate over the relative inaccessibility of English literary classics, ongoing in the pages of the *Athenaeum* since 11 July 1919 under the title "Our Inaccessible Heritage."

8. Wealthy Roman consul and poet Silius Italicus (ca. 26-101 AD) authored the seventeen-book narrative of the Second Punic War, *Punica*, which his contemporary Pliny the Younger said was written with more diligence than inspiration.

9. *piétinement sur place*: running in place.

10. *hommes de métier*: specialists.

11†. Misprinted in *Shama'a*: "But as Ernest Bowson, like a"

12. Both Ernest Dowson (1867-1900) and Lionel Johnson (1867-1902) were members of the Rhymers' Club and of the group of aesthetes that W. B. Yeats later dubbed "the tragic generation," an epithet that reflected both men's alcoholism, troubled sexuality, and sense of the irreconcilable

conflict between sensuous pleasure and ascetic religious ideals. TSE had taught the verse of both in his 1917 Extension course (1.591). In his 1936 lecture "Tradition and the Practice of Poetry," he later reflected that, as a young man, he felt a greater kinship toward nineties poets such as Dowson and Johnson than toward his English or American contemporaries.

13. "Bishop Blougram's Apology," in *Men and Women* (1855); TSE taught *Men and Women* and commented upon Browning's "range of emotion" in his 1916 Extension lectures (1.478).

14. Arthur Rimbaud, "Au cabaret-vert" [At the Green Tavern], *Poésies complètes* (1895); in a letter to Edward J. H. Green, TSE called it "un des meilleurs sonnets" [one of the best sonnets]. *T. S. Eliot et la France* (Paris: Boivin, 1951), 63.

15. *Trans*: "This trunk of a man on which the ulcer grows, (leaning) against this trunk of a tree on which grows the mistletoe." TSE's own translation (in the Clark lectures) of lines from Corbière's "*La Rapsode foraine et le Pardon de Sainte-Anne*" [The Traveling Minstrel and the Pardon of Saint Anne], originally in *Les Amours jaunes* (1873). In the Clark lectures TSE calls "La Rapsode" Corbière's "greatest poem" and says that this conceit is "worthy of Dante" (747). TSE owned the "édition définitive" of Corbière's *Les Amours jaunes* (Paris: Albert Messein, 1912). He used two preceding lines from the poem as the original epigraph, subsequently deleted, to "Sweeney Erect" (*IMH* 356). Pound, whom TSE mentions later in the present essay, called the poem "to my mind, beyond all comment" in *Instigations* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1920), 19.

16. *Trans*: baked aspect. Dante's Brunetto Latini suffers under the rain of fire in *Inferno* XV.26, where the pilgrim describes fixing "my eyes on his baked aspect, so that the scorching of his visage hindered not / my mind from knowing him" (*DC1* 161). TSE later returned to the phrase in *Little Gidding*: "in the brown baked features / The eyes of a familiar compound ghost" (*CPP* 140).

17. TSE first read Mallarmé in *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*, in which Arthur Symons emphasizes the poet's belief that "words, therefore, must be employed with an extreme care, in their choice and adjustment, in setting them to reflect and chime upon one another." In "Le Mystère dans les lettres" [Mystery in Literature] (1896), Mallarmé claims that syntax is the "pivot" [linchpin] or "garantie" [guarantee] of intelligibility.

18. "The Snare" by Georgian poet James Stephens (1882-1950), in *Songs from the Clay* (1915). In "Verse Pleasant and Unpleasant," TSE called another of Stephens's poems "unintelligible to any one who has not substituted Georgian emotions for human ones" (1.679).

19†. Misprinted in *Shama'a*: "the emotion is our rabbit, you"

20. The theory that bodily actions and visceral sensations are the cause rather than the effect of emotions. It was forwarded independently by William James in 1884 and by Dutch psychologist C. G. Lange in 1885; TSE refers to the James-Lange theory in his graduate writings (1.59, 1.335).

21†. Misprinted in *Shama'a*: "more of less *dadaistes*"

22. *Trans*: title, "The white leprous giant in the countryside": "The salt collects in a constellation of birds on the padded tumour / in his lungs the starfish and bugs sway / the microbes crystallize into palms of swaying muscles / good morning without a cigarette tzantzantza ganga / boozdooc zdooc nfoonfa mbaah." *Chanson Dada*, trans. Lee Harwood (Boston: Black Widow Press, 2005), 34. TSE included an excerpt from this poem when he reviewed Tzara's *vingt-cinq poèmes* (1918) in "Reflections on Contemporary Poetry [IV]" (68-69). Accents added in the present edition.

23. TSE likely first saw performances by Sergei Diaghilev's avant-garde dance company, the Ballets Russes, while he was in Paris in 1910-11; its third season opened there in June 1911 and included Stravinsky's *Petrushka*. He had recently attended productions of *Carnival*, *The Firebird*, and *The Good-Humored Ladies* in May 1919 at the Alhambra Theatre, and he saw the opening of *The Three-Cornered Hat*, with music by Manuel de Falla and set design by Picasso, on 22 July 1919.

24. The contrast between the beautiful panther and cunning fox appears in variant versions of Aesop's fable, "The Leopard and the Fox"; for instance, Plutarch's retelling in "Whether the Passions of the Soul or Diseases of the Body Are Worse," *Morals*, vol IV, ed. William Goodwin (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1874), 505. Thersites, in the *Iliad* and in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, is a lowborn, deformed Greek soldier with a boorish, vulgar demeanor; Shakespeare's Agamemnon refers with disdain to "rank Thersites" opening and closing "his mastic jaws" (I.iii.74). In his 1818 lectures on Shakespeare, to which TSE refers elsewhere, Coleridge describes Thersites as "the Caliban of demagogic life; – the admirable portrait of intellectual power deserted by all grace." *Lectures and Notes upon Shakespeare and Other English Poets*, ed. T. Ashe (London: George Bell and Sons, 1883), 308.

25. In *Design and Art* (1928), Arts League of Service secretary Ana Berry published a retrospective of the organization's activities with artists, including the "Modern Tendencies in Art" lecture series. Her essay reprints a number of "special paragraphs" that originally appeared in the 1920 *Bulletin* of the Arts League of Service and that contain "opinions of distinguished artists and writers most of whom were hardly known." Among these passages by other lecturers in the series appears the following quotation attributed to TSE, which was evidently solicited specifically for the purpose of appearing in the *Bulletin*: "The heart of the matter is that poetry should be well written. Decadent or perverse poetry is not well written. The careless word, the soiled ignoble phrase, the vulgar or languid or violent choice and order, are the work of confused intellect, impure feeling, and defective moral organisation." "A Survey: Some Younger Artists and the A. L. S.," 53. Donald Gallup inspected one of the last extant copies of the 1920 *Bulletin* (none of which remain) and, assuming that the passage derived from the lecture itself, he wrote: "A five-line excerpt is printed under the heading 'T. S. Eliot on Poetry' . . . p. 9, with a note that the lecture 'will also form the theme of an essay on Poetry which will be published shortly by The Egoist.'"

Dante[1]

M. Paul Valéry, a writer for whom I have considerable respect, has placed in his most recent statement upon poetry a paragraph which seems to me of very doubtful validity. I have not seen the complete essay, and know the quotation only as it appears in a critical notice in the *Athenaeum*, July 23, 1920:

> La philosophie, et même la morale tendirent à fuir les œuvres pour se placer dans les réflexions qui les précèdent. . . . Parler aujourd'hui de poésie philosophique (fût-ce en invoquant Alfred de Vigny, Leconte de Lisle, et quelques autres), c'est naïvement confondre des conditions et des applications de l'esprit incompatibles entre elles. N'est-ce pas oublier que le but de celui qui spécule est de fixer ou de créer une notion – c'est-à-dire un *pouvoir* et un *instrument de pouvoir*, cependant que le poète moderne essaie de produire en nous un *état* et de porter cet état exceptionnel au point d'une jouissance parfaite. . . .[2]

It may be that I do M. Valéry an injustice which I must endeavour to repair when I have the pleasure of reading his article entire. But the paragraph gives the impression of more than one error of analysis. In the first place, it suggests that conditions have changed, that "philosophical" poetry may once have been permissible, but that (perhaps owing to the greater specialization of the modern world) it is now intolerable. We are forced to assume that what we do not like in our time was never good art, and that what appears to us good was always so. If any ancient "philosophical" poetry retains its value, a value which we fail to find in modern poetry of the same type, we investigate on the assumption that we shall find some difference to which the mere difference of date is irrelevant. But if it be maintained that the older poetry has a "philosophic" element and a "poetic" element which can be isolated, we have two tasks to perform. We must show first in a particular case – our case is Dante – that the philosophy is essential to the structure and that the structure is essential to the poetic beauty of the parts; and we must show that the philosophy is employed in a different form from that which it takes in admittedly unsuccessful philosophical poems. And if M. Valéry is in error in his complete exorcism of

"philosophy," perhaps the basis of the error is his apparently commendatory interpretation of the effort of the modern poet, namely, that the latter endeavours "to produce in us a *state*."

The early philosophical poets, Parmenides and Empedocles, were apparently persons of an impure philosophical inspiration. Neither their predecessors nor their successors expressed themselves in verse; Parmenides and Empedocles were persons who mingled with genuine philosophical ability a good deal of the emotion of the founder of a second-rate religious system. They were not interested exclusively in philosophy, or religion, or poetry, but in something which was a mixture of all three; hence their reputation as poets is low and as philosophers should be considerably below Heraclitus, Zeno, Anaxagoras, or Democritus.[3] The poem of Lucretius is quite a different matter. For Lucretius was undoubtedly a poet. He endeavours to expound a philosophical system, but with a different motive from Parmenides or Empedocles, for this system is already in existence; he is really endeavouring to find the concrete poetic equivalent for this system – to find its complete equivalent in vision.[4] Only, as he is an innovator in this art, he wavers between philosophical poetry and philosophy. So we find passages such as:

> But the velocity of thunderbolts is great and their stroke powerful, and they run through their course with a rapid descent, because the force when aroused first in all cases collects itself in the clouds and . . . Let us now sing what causes the motions of the stars. . . . Of all these different smells then which strike the nostrils one may reach to a much greater distance than another. . . .[5*]

But Lucretius' true tendency is to express an ordered vision of the life of man, with great vigour of real poetic image and often acute observation.

> quod petiere, premunt arte faciuntque dolorem
> corporis et dentes inlidunt saepe labellis
> osculaque adfligunt, quia non est pura voluptas
> et stimuli subsunt qui instigant laedere id ipsum
> quodcumque est, rabies unde illaec germina surgunt . . .[6]

> medio de fonte leporum
> surgit amari aliquid quod in ipsis floribus angat . . .[7]

> nec procumbere humi prostratum et pandere palmas

ante deum delubra nec aras sanguine multo
spargere quadrupedum nec votis nectere vota,
sed mage pacata posse omnia mente tueri.[8]

The philosophy which Lucretius tackled was not rich enough in variety of feeling, applied itself to life too uniformly, to supply the material for a wholly successful poem. It was incapable of complete expansion into pure vision. But I must ask M. Valéry whether the "aim" of Lucretius' poem was "to fix or create a notion" or to fashion "an instrument of power."

Without doubt, the effort of the philosopher proper, the man who is trying to deal with ideas in themselves, and the effort of the poet, who may be trying to *realize* ideas, cannot be carried on at the same time. But this is not to deny that poetry can be in some sense philosophic. The poet can deal with philosophic ideas, not as matter for argument, but as matter for inspection. The original form of a philosophy cannot be poetic. But poetry can be penetrated by a philosophic idea, it can deal with this idea when it has reached the point of immediate acceptance, when it has become almost a physical modification. If we divorced poetry and philosophy altogether, we should bring a serious impeachment, not only against Dante, but against most of Dante's contemporaries.

Dante had the benefit of a mythology and a theology which had undergone a more complete absorption into life than those of Lucretius. It is curious that not only Dante's detractors, like the Petrarch of Landor's *Pentameron* (if we may apply so strong a word to so amiable a character), but some of his admirers, insist on the separation of Dante's "poetry" and Dante's "teaching."[9] Sometimes the philosophy is confused with the allegory. The philosophy is an ingredient, it is a part of Dante's world just as it is a part of life; the allegory is the scaffold on which the poem is built. An American writer of a little primer of Dante, Mr. Henry Dwight Sedgwick, who desires to improve our understanding of Dante as a "spiritual leader," says:

> To Dante this literal Hell was a secondary matter; so it is to us. He and we are concerned with the allegory. That allegory is simple. Hell is the absence of God. . . . If the reader begins with the consciousness that he is reading about sin, spiritually understood, he never loses the thread, he is never at a loss, never slips back into the literal signification. [79, 81]

Without stopping to question Mr. Sedgwick on the difference between literal and spiritual sin, we may affirm that his remarks are misleading. Undoubtedly the allegory is to be taken seriously, and certainly the *Comedy* is in some way a "moral education." The question is to find a formula for the correspondence between the former and the latter, to decide whether the moral value corresponds directly to the allegory. We can easily ascertain what importance Dante assigned to allegorical method. In the *Convivio* we are seriously informed that

> the principal design [of the odes] is to lead men to knowledge and virtue, as will be seen in the progress of the truth of them;[10]

and we are also given the familiar four interpretations of an ode: literal, allegorical, moral, and anagogical. And so distinguished a scholar as M. Hauvette repeats again and again the phrase "didactique d'intention."[11] We accept the allegory. Accepted, there are two usual ways of dealing with it. One may, with Mr. Sedgwick, dwell upon its significance for the seeker of "spiritual light," or one may, with Landor, deplore the spiritual mechanics and find the poet only in passages where he frees himself from his divine purposes [81].[12] With neither of these points of view can we concur. Mr. Sedgwick magnifies the "preacher and prophet," and presents Dante as a superior Isaiah or Carlyle; Landor reserves the poet, reprehends the scheme, and denounces the politics [77]. Some of Landor's errors are more palpable than Mr. Sedgwick's. He errs, in the first place, in judging Dante by the standards of classical epic.[13] Whatever the *Comedy* is, an epic it is not. M. Hauvette well says:

> Rechercher dans quelle mesure le poème se rapproche du genre classique de l'épopée, et dans quelle mesure il s'en écarte, est un exercice de rhétorique entièrement inutile, puisque Dante, à n'en pas douter, n'a jamais eu l'intention de composer une action épique dans les règles.[14]

But we must define the framework of Dante's poem from the result as well as from the intention. The poem has not only a framework, but a form; and even if the framework be allegorical, the form may be something else. The examination of any episode in the *Comedy* ought to show that not merely the allegorical interpretation or the didactic intention, but the emotional significance itself, cannot be isolated from the rest of the poem. Landor appears, for instance, to have misunderstood such a passage as the Paolo and Francesca, by failing to perceive its relations:

In the midst of her punishment, Francesca, when she comes to the tenderest part of her story, tells it with complacency and delight.[15]

This is surely a false simplification. To have lost all recollected delight would have been, for Francesca, either loss of humanity or relief from damnation. The ecstasy, with the present thrill at the remembrance of it, is a part of the torture. Francesca is neither stupefied nor reformed; she is merely damned; and it is a part of damnation to experience desires that we can no longer gratify. For in Dante's Hell souls are not deadened, as they mostly are in life; they are actually in the greatest torment of which each is capable.

e il modo ancor m'offende.[16†]

It is curious that Mr. Sedgwick, whose approbation is at the opposite pole from Landor's, should have fallen into a similar error. He says:

> In meeting [Ulysses], as in meeting Pier della Vigna and Brunetto Latini, the preacher and the prophet are lost in the poet.[17]

Here, again, is a false simplification. These passages have no digressive beauty. The case of Brunetto is parallel to that of Francesca. The emotion of the passage resides in Brunetto's excellence in damnation – so admirable a soul, and so perverse.

e parve di costoro
quegli che vince e non colui che perde.[18]

And I think that if Mr. Sedgwick had pondered the strange words of Ulysses,

com' altrui piacque,[19]

he would not have said that the preacher and prophet are lost in the poet. "Preacher" and "prophet" are odious terms; but what Mr. Sedgwick designates by them is something which is certainly not "lost in the poet," but is part of the poet.

A variety of passages might illustrate the assertion that no emotion is contemplated by Dante purely in and for itself. The emotion of the person, or the emotion with which our attitude appropriately invests the person, is never lost or diminished, is always preserved entire, but is modified by the position assigned to the person in the eternal scheme, is coloured by the

atmosphere of that person's residence in one of the three worlds. About none of Dante's characters is there that ambiguity which affects Milton's Lucifer. The damned preserve any degree of beauty or grandeur that ever rightly pertained to them, and this intensifies and also justifies their damnation. As Jason

> Guarda quel grande che viene,
> e per dolor non par lagrima spanda :
> quanto aspetto reale ancor ritiene![20]

The crime of Bertrand becomes more lurid; the vindictive Adamo acquires greater ferocity, and the errors of Arnaut are corrected –

> Poi s'ascose nel foco che gli affina.[21]

If the artistic emotion presented by any episode of the *Comedy* is dependent upon the whole, we may proceed to inquire what the whole scheme is. The usefulness of allegory and astronomy is obvious. A mechanical framework, in a poem of so vast an ambit, was a necessity. As the centre of gravity of emotions is more remote from a single human action, or a system of purely human actions, than in drama or epic, so the framework has to be more artificial and apparently more mechanical. It is not essential that the allegory or the almost unintelligible astronomy should be understood – only that its presence should be justified. The emotional structure within this scaffold is what must be understood – the structure made possible by the scaffold. This structure is an ordered scale of human emotions. Not, necessarily, *all* human emotions; and in any case all the emotions are limited, and also extended in significance by their place in the scheme.

But Dante's is the most comprehensive, and the most *ordered* presentation of emotions that has ever been made. Dante's method of dealing with any emotion may be contrasted, not so appositely with that of other "epic" poets as with that of Shakespeare. Shakespeare takes a character apparently controlled by a simple emotion, and analyses the character and the emotion itself. The emotion is split up into constituents – and perhaps destroyed in the process. The mind of Shakespeare was one of the most *critical* that has ever existed. Dante, on the other hand, does not analyse the emotion so much as he exhibits its relation to other emotions. You cannot, that is, understand the *Inferno* without the *Purgatorio* and the *Paradiso*. "Dante," says Landor's Petrarch, "is the great master of the disgusting."[22] That is true, though Sophocles at least once approaches him. But a disgust

like Dante's is no hypertrophy of a single reaction: it is completed and explained only by the last canto of the *Paradiso*.

La forma universal di questo nodo,
credo ch'io vidi, perchè più di largo,
dicendo questo, mi sento ch'io godo.[23†]

The contemplation of the horrid or sordid or disgusting, by an artist, is the necessary and negative aspect of the impulse toward the pursuit of beauty. But not all succeed as did Dante in expressing the complete scale from negative to positive. The negative is the more importunate.

The structure of emotions, for which the allegory is the necessary scaffold, is complete from the most sensuous to the most intellectual and the most spiritual. Dante gives a concrete presentation of the most elusive:

Pareva a me che nube ne coprisse
lucida, spessa, solida e polita,
quasi adamante che lo sol ferisse.

Per entro sè l'eterna margarita
ne recepette, com' acqua recepe
raggio di luce, permanendo unita.[24]

or

Nel suo aspetto tal dentro mi fei,
qual si fe' Glauco nel gustar dell' erba,
che il fe' consorto in mar degli altri dei.[25*]

Again, in the *Purgatorio*, for instance in Canto XVI and Canto XVIII, occur passages of pure exposition of philosophy, the philosophy of Aristotle strained through the schools.

Lo natural è sempre senza errore,
ma l'altro puote errar per malo obbietto,
o per poco o per troppo di vigore . . .[26]

We are not here studying the philosophy, we *see* it, as part of the ordered world. The aim of the poet is to state a vision, and no vision of life can be complete which does not include the articulate formulation of life which human minds make.

Onde convenne legge per fren porre . . .[27]

It is one of the greatest merits of Dante's poem that the vision is so nearly complete; it is evidence of this greatness that the significance of any single passage, of any of the passages that are selected as "poetry," is incomplete unless we ourselves apprehend the whole.

And Dante helps us to provide a criticism of M. Valéry's "modern poet" who attempts "to produce in us a *state*." A state, in itself, is nothing whatever.

M. Valéry's account is quite in harmony with pragmatic doctrine, and with the tendencies of such a work as William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*. The mystical experience is supposed to be valuable because it is a pleasant state of unique intensity.[28] But the true mystic is not satisfied merely by feeling, he must pretend at least that he *sees*, and the absorption into the divine is only the necessary, if paradoxical, limit of this contemplation. The poet does not aim to excite – that is not even a test of his success – but to set something down; the state of the reader is merely that reader's particular mode of perceiving what the poet has caught in words. Dante, more than any other poet, has succeeded in dealing with his philosophy, not as a theory (in the modern and not the Greek sense of that word) or as his own comment or reflection, but in terms of something *perceived*. When most of our modern poets confine themselves to what they had perceived, they produce for us, usually, only odds and ends of still life and stage properties; but that does not imply so much that the method of Dante is obsolete, as that our vision is perhaps comparatively restricted.

Note. – My friend the Abbé Laban has reproached me for attributing to Landor, in this essay, sentiments which are merely the expression of his dramatic figure Petrarch, and which imply rather Landor's reproof of the limitations of the historical Petrarch's view of Dante, than the view of Landor himself. The reader should therefore observe this correction of my use of Landor's honoured name.[29]

NOTES

1. As printed in *SW*; originally "Dante as a 'Spiritual Leader,'" *The Athenaeum*, 4692 (2 Apr 1920), 441-42, a review of *Dante: An Elementary Book for Those Who Seek in the Great Poet the Teacher of Spiritual Life*, by Henry Dwight Sedgwick. London: Humphrey Milford, 1918; rpt. 1920. Pp. xiii + 187. TSE wrote to Ottoline Morrell on 21 Mar: "I have just finished an article on

Dante . . . . I feel that anything I can say about such a subject is trivial. I feel so completely inferior in his presence – there seems really nothing to do but to point to him and be silent" (*L1* 453). The name of Henry Dwight Sedgwick (1861-1957) was misspelled "Sidgwick" in the original and in *SW* (likely after the philosopher Henry Sidgwick, whose work TSE addressed in a paper at Harvard) (1.147); it is here corrected throughout.

2. *Trans*: "Philosophy, and even ethics, tended to shun the actual works and take their place among the reflections preceding them. . . . To speak nowadays of philosophic poetry (even invoking the names of Alfred de Vigny, Leconte de Lisle, and a few others) is naïvely to confuse incompatible conditions and uses of the mind. Is not this to forget that the aim of speculation is to fix or create an idea – that is, a *power* and an *instrument of power* – whereas the modern poet tries to produce in us a *state* and to raise this exceptional state to the level of perfect enjoyment . . . [?]" Trans. Denise Folliot, "A Foreword," *The Art of Poetry* (New York: Pantheon,1958), 44. From Paul Valéry's preface to *Connaissance de la déesse* (1920) by Lucien Fabre, as quoted in Charles Du Bos's "Letters from Paris," *Athenaeum*, 4708 (23 July 1920), 126-27.

3. Pre-Socratic Greek philosophers Parmenides (fl. 480 BC) and Empedocles (ca. 495-435 BC) composed in didactic, hexameter verse; Heraclitus (ca. 540-480 BC), Zeno (ca. 490-after 445 BC), Anaxagorus (ca. 500-428 BC), Democritus (460-357 BC), in prose.

4. Lucretius based his *De rerum natura* [*On the Nature of Things*], a didactic, hexameter poem in six books, on the atomistic theories and moral reasoning of Greek philosopher Epicurus.

5*. TSE's note: "Munro's translation, *passim*." Three excerpts from *De rerum natura*, books VI, V, and IV, respectively, taken from the two-volume edition that TSE owned: Trans. H. A. J. Munro (Cambridge: Deighton Bell, 1864), 160, 128, 100.

6. *De rerum natura*, IV.1079-83. *Trans*: "What they have sought, they tightly squeeze and cause pain of body and often imprint their teeth on the lips and clash mouth to mouth in kissing, because the pleasure is not pure and there are hidden stings which stimulate to hurt even that whatever it is from which spring those germs of frenzy." Munro, 110.

7. *De rerum natura*, IV.1133-34. *Trans*: "out of the very well-spring of delights rises up something of bitter, to pain amid the very flowers." Munro, 111.

8. *De rerum natura*, V.1200-03. *Trans*: "[No act is it of piety to . . .] fall prostrate on the ground and spread out the palms before the statues of the gods and sprinkle the altars with much blood of beasts and nail up vow after vow, but rather to be able to look on all things with a mind at peace." Munro, 145. TSE owned the Latin text, *De rerum natura libri sex*, ed. Cyril Bailey (Oxford: Clarendon, 1910).

9. Walter Savage Landor's *The Pentameron* (1837) consists of a series of fictional conversations between Francesco Petrarca (1304-74) and Giovanni Boccaccio, both of whom praise Dante's "poetical character" in the *Commedia* but sharply criticize the cruelty of the punishments that he devises and the rigidity of his theological system. *The Pentameron and Other Imaginary Conversations* (London: Walter Scott, 1889), 6.

10. TSE's brackets. Dante explains the ethical purpose of the *Convivio* ("The Banquet"), the unfinished philosophical treatise in prosimetrum that he composed between 1304 and 1307 and abandoned just before beginning the *Commedia*. TSE owned the Temple Classics edition, *The Convivio of Dante Aligheri* (1912); he here mistranscribes the final phrase, which should read "the progress of the treatment of them" (42).

11. *Trans*: didactic in intention. In *Dante: Introduction à l'étude de la Divine comédie* (Paris: Hachette, 1911), Henri Hauvette (1865-1935) calls the *Commedia* "essentiellement personnelle d'inspiration, didactique d'intention" [essentially personal in inspiration, didactic in intention] (207).

12. In the *Pentameron* (Book III), Landor's Boccaccio laments the brevity with which Dante surrenders his didactic aims for pure lyricism. He is best when he "dismisses the doctors," "corks up the Latin," and "ceases from psalmody"; however, "too soon the hard fingers of the master are round our wrists again: we are dragged into the school, and are obliged to attend the divinity-examination" (71-72).

13. "I must confess there are nowhere two whole cantos in Dante," argues Landor's Boccaccio in *Pentameron*, Book I, "which will bear a sustained and close comparison with the very worst book of the *Odyssea* or the *Aeneid*" (25).

14. *Trans*: To examine to what extent the poem approximates the classical genre of Epic, and to what extent it deviates from it, is an entirely useless rhetorical exercise, because Dante doubtless never had the intention to compose a conventional epic. *Dante: Introduction*, 207-08. *Read*: "n'a jamais eu la pensée" [never had the thought].

15. *Pentameron*, Book I (18).

16†. In *Ath*: "Ancor il modo m'offende"

Inferno V.102. *Trans*: "and the manner still afflicts me" (*DC1* 55). Francesca sorrowfully recalls both the manner in which Paolo fell in love with her and the violent way that they were murdered by her husband, Giovanni Malatesta.

17. TSE's brackets; Sedgwick, 77.

18. *Inferno* XV.123-24. *Trans*: "and of them seemed he who gains, not he who loses" (*DC1* 165); *read*: "di costoro" and "quegli." Dante compares the departing shade of his mentor, Brunetto Latini, to a victorious participant in a race at Verona. TSE marked these lines in his Temple Classics edition.

19. *Inferno* XXVI.141. *Trans*: "as pleased Another" (*DC1* 295). The shade of Ulysses suggests that the will of God ("Another") compelled the shipwreck that killed him and his crew once they came within sight of the Mount of Purgatory. TSE later adapted the phrase in the manuscript version of "Death by Water," at the conclusion of a similar narrative: "And if Another knows, I know I know not" (*WLF* 61).

20. *Inferno* XVIII.83-85. *Trans*: "Look at that great *soul* who comes, and seems to shed no tear for pain: / what a regal aspect he yet retains!" (*DC1* 197). Dante places Jason, the mythological leader of the Argonauts, among the seducers in the eighth circle of hell.

21. *Purgatorio* XXVI.148. *Trans*: "Then he hid him in the fire which refines them" (*DC2* 331). Spoken by the shade of Provençal poet Arnaut Daniel, whose "error," like that of all the lustful in the seventh terrace, was allowing appetite to overcome intellect. A line in the original epigraph to "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (*IMH* 39), it appears again in the last stanza of *The Waste Land* (*CPP* 50). Bertran de Born wanders among the "sowers of schism" in the eighth circle of hell, carrying his own severed head as a lantern (*Inferno* XXVIII.118-42). Adam of Brescia ("Adamo"), a counterfeiter who was burned at the stake, argues viciously with another shade in the eighth circle, where he suffers eternal thirst (*Inferno* XXX.49-129); TSE quoted from the last scene in his essay on Swinburne (183).

22. *Pentameron*, Book II (192).

23†. In *Ath*: "La form' universal . . . senti ch'io godo"

Paradiso XXXIII.91-93. *Trans*: "The universal form of this complex I think that I beheld, because more largely, as I say this, I feel that I rejoice" (*DC3* 405).

24. *Paradiso* II.31-36. *Trans*: "Meseemed a cloud enveloped us, shining, dense, firm and polished, like diamond smitten by the sun. / Within itself the eternal pearl received us, as water doth receive a ray of light, though still itself uncleft" (*DC3* 17).

25*. TSE's note: "See E. Pound, *The Spirit of Romance*, p. 145." *Paradiso* I.67-69. *Trans*: "Gazing on her such I became within, as was Glaucus, tasting of the grass that made him the sea-fellow of the other gods" (*DC3* 7). In chapter six of *The Spirit of Romance* (London: J. M. Dent, 1910), Pound quotes each of the three preceding stanzas in English translation and concludes, "Nowhere is the nature of the mystic ecstasy so well described. . . . With such beauty as this is the *Paradiso* radiant" (147).

26. *Purgatorio* XVII.94-96. *Trans*: "The natural is always without error; but the other may err through an evil object, or through too little or too much vigour" (*DC2* 209). Dante's discussion of natural love ("Lo natural") adopts the Thomistic distinction between natural love and elective or rational love, a distinction which, like much in Scholastic theology, draws upon Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*; for TSE's remarks to this effect in the *Ath* review, see textual note 2. TSE marked these and the adjacent lines (91-108) his copy of the *Purgatorio* (Houghton).

27. *Purgatorio* XVI.94. *Trans*: "Wherefore 'twas needful to put law as a curb" (*DC2* 197); TSE paraphrased this line in "An American Critic": "the human soul . . . in order to be human, requires *discipline*" (1.407). He marked the entire passage (85-98) in his copy of the *Purgatorio*.

28. TSE studied James's work at Harvard and took extensive notes on the chapter on mysticism in *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1902), wherein James investigates "the existence of mystical moments as states of consciousness of an entirely specific quality" and suggests: "We pass into mystical states from out of ordinary consciousness as from a less into a more, as from a smallness into a vastness, and at the same time as from an unrest to a rest. We feel them as reconciling, unifying states" (416).

29. This note was added in *SW*. "Abbé Laban" is likely a pseudonym for Ezra Pound, who described Landor as "the first useful critic, or the first analytical critic in English" and applauded his keen historical perspective: "Surely no man has ever interpreted more different eras with sureness and thoroughness, whether it be in 'Pericles and Aspasia,' or his dialogues between Chaucer, Petrarch and Boccaccio." From "Landor (1775-1964). A Note," *Future*, 2 (Nov 1917), 10-12.

TEXTUAL NOTES

1. In *SW*, TSE added six new paragraphs at the beginning of the essay, deleting the original introductory paragraph from *Ath*:

> The primary virtues of Introductions to Great Authors are comprehensiveness and brevity. They should be little books that say something about the authors' lives and something about all of their work. It is not their function to express any very profound or searching literary criticism. Mr. Sedgwick has succeeded so well that there is not very much to say about his handbook: it is brief, complete, and bibliographical. He makes, however, one or two statements which, on so important a subject, are worth a challenge.

In as much as Dante is a "spiritual leader," Mr. Sedgwick attaches great importance to the allegory of the *Comedy*:

This passage was followed by the quotation from Sedgwick as it stands in the present version ("To Dante this literal Hell was a secondary matter . . .").

2. In *SW*, TSE added three new concluding paragraphs and the "Note," replacing the final paragraph in *Ath*, which directly followed his statement, "The negative is the more importunate":

> The talent of Dante was not for discovery, but for organization. His knowledge was encyclopaedic, but unacquainted with the curiosity, the empiricism, of such a mind as Leonardo's. It was not a scientific mind. He was more attracted by the emotional aspect of extant knowledge than he was impelled to explore the unknown. His politics were emotional. Several passages of the *Purgatorio* are the emotional extract of the *Nicomachaean Ethics* filtered through the Schools:
>
> Lo natural e sempre senza errore,
> Ma l'altro puote errar per malo obbietto,
> O per poco o per troppo di vigore.
>
> The range, the relation, and the *balance* of the emotions are what distinguish the *Divine Comedy* from all other poems. That also is what makes Dante, in the right artistic sense, a "moral teacher." He understood an emotion, not by analysing it, but by assigning it its proper value.
>
> Onde convenne legge per fren porre . . .
>
> therefore Dante is also the severest, the most erudite of technicians, the best subject for attentive study by serious poets. The *Convivio*, the *de Vulgari Eloquio*, are of great importance for poets, and still more is the study of the success, the perfection of the writing, which carries off triumphantly the least inspired of passages. And the technical probity of Dante as a writer is another reason why, as the wrapper of Mr. Sedgwick's book declares, we may "turn to Dante for guidance and support."
>
> T. S. E.

The Criticism of Poetry

To the Editor of the *TLS*

Times Literary Supplement, 953 (22 Apr 1920) 256

Sir, – Your reviewer of last week handled my Essay on the Criticism of Poetry with more courteous clemency than this defective composition deserved.[1] My essay contains much matter that should be erased and much that should be reformed; it is incoherent and inexact. I should therefore not affect amazement at learning that the view of criticism detailed in the first paragraph of your reviewer's article is supposed to be the opposite of mine, or at hearing given as my opinion that "a poet ought not to know what he is doing, but should just do it."[2] I can only apologize to the reviewer for the obscurity which has induced him to this interpretation.

I must say, however, that your reviewer's notions of criticism are not much more satisfactory to me than my own. I suppose that it will be admitted that, with one or two exceptions in remote antiquity, all the best criticism of poetry is the criticism of poets; and I am not prepared to concede that the criticism of Dryden, or of Coleridge, or even Matthew Arnold has "the intellectual incoherence" which the reviewer says is the "innocent defect of art" and apparently the inevitable vice of criticism written by poets.[3] The reviewer's use of the word "philosopher" seems to point not to Aristotle so much as to such persons as Hegel and Croce.[4] I am not sure that your reviewer distinguishes the mind which endeavours to generalize its impressions of literary beauty from the mind which endeavours to support a theory of aesthetics by examples drawn from the arts. Schopenhauer, I seem to remember, admired the Apollo Belvedere because the head – the spiritual residence – appeared to strive to detach itself from the body.[5] In general, philosophers (or professors of philosophy) are as ignorant of poetry as of mathematics; and the fact that they have read much poetry is no more assurance of competence in criticizing poetry than their ability to reckon in shillings and pence is of their competence to criticize mathematicians.[6]

It would be helpful if your critic would elucidate his use of the term "philosophy." My chief reason for writing this letter is my desire that the problems of critical principles should be more pondered and discussed,

and that both critics and readers should apply themselves to consider the nature of criticism.

I am, Sir, your humble servant,

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Arthur Clutton-Brock was the author of "The Criticism of Poetry" (*TLS*, 15 Apr 1920, 236), an unsigned review of a special issue of *Chapbook* (II.9), which contained TSE's "A Brief Treatise on the Criticism of Poetry" (202). TSE characterized Clutton-Brock as a "disciple" of William Morris in his 1917 Extension course (1.591); he told Mary Hutchinson, in a letter of 25 Aug 1918, that he had met him "once or twice" in person (*L1* 281).

2. TSE responds to Clutton-Brock's claims that "in poetry as in the other arts, there is still a vicious estrangement between art and conscious intelligence, still the notion, held often by poets themselves, that a poet ought not to know what he is doing, but should just do it; that poetry is to be admired and enjoyed, but never reasoned about." "Mr. Eliot," he concludes, "really holds this view."

3. Clutton-Brock writes: "We believe that our criticism of poetry lacks principle just because there is a common belief that poetry cannot usefully be made the subject matter of philosophy, that criticism of it must be left to poets . . . and that it must have the intellectual incoherence which is not the necessary property but the innocent defect of art. The artist, not aiming at intellectual coherence, can do without it; but the critic cannot."

4. Benedetto Croce was influenced by the idealist philosophy of Hegel. In a 1916 review of Clutton-Brock's treatise, *The Ultimate Belief*, TSE referred to him as "a student of Croce" (1.436).

5. Arthur Schopenhauer admires the Apollo Belvedere – a marble copy of a Hellenistic Greek bronze statue that was discovered in the fifteenth century and displayed for a time in the Vatican's Belvedere Court – in Book III of *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* [*The World as Will and Representation*] (1818), where he generalizes about the power of human intelligence by drawing upon his impression that "the head of the god of the Muses, with eyes fixed on the far distance, stands so freely on his shoulders that it seems wholly delivered from the body, and no more subject to its cares." Trans. Haldane and Kemp (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1907), 230.

6. Clutton-Brock contends that TSE's analogy – just as only a mathematician can understand a book on mathematics, so too only a practicing poet can understand poetic technique – is false because "the poet uses language which is a common and constant means of expression for all men. . . . We are all 'to some extent' poets even in our talk; but we are not all mathematicians. So the philosopher who would treat of mathematics needs a special training; but the philosopher who would treat of poetry has some training at least, because he can speak."

The Poetic Drama[1]

A review of *Cinnamon and Angelica: A Play*

by John Middleton Murry

London: Cobden-Sanderson: 1920. Pp. 111.

The Athenaeum, 4698 (14 May 1920) 635-36

The impotence of contemporary drama is a commonplace riddle of cultured pessimism. A convocation of dramatic enthusiasts recently revealed, that on the one hand there are plenty of writers who could compose good plays if anyone would stage them, and that on the other hand there are a dozen producers ready to snap up a good play if they could find one. Poetic dramas are not infrequently printed; we have abandoned the speculation of why they are so dull. But Mr. Murry is an interesting case – interesting enough to revive once more the whole discussion; for he is a writer who might be, or might in a happier age have been (according to our hopeful or pessimistic humours), a poetic dramatist. He has virtues which are his own, and vices which are general. It is therefore a real pleasure, an exceptional pleasure, to have a patient like Mr. Murry extended on the operating table; we need our sharpest instruments, and steadiest nerves, if we are to do him justice.

Two possibilities we may exclude at once. A poetic drama may be simply bad, in which case the cause of its failure will not be worth further examination. Or it may be poetry which should have been cast in some form which is not dramatic. Plays of this sort are written at times when drama is decaying, but when no other form is at hand: Browning wrote dull plays, but invented the dramatic monologue or character.[2] When the poetic drama has wholly disappeared, when it is, as at the present time, a lost art, this mistake is less frequently made. The natural evolution, for us, would be to proceed in the direction indicated by Browning; to distil the dramatic essences, if we can, and infuse them into some other liquor. The poet who now applies himself to the drama (I exclude, of course, those who are competent for nothing) will be one with a strong and (we may even say) philosophic conviction in favour of this form. He will be a very conscious poet, with an historical imagination; it is the consciousness, the construction of

the possible meaning, the possible value in feeling which a triumphant poetic drama might have for the sensibilities of the most sensitive contemporary, that has moved him. This poet will be a complex person: he is impelled both by a desire to give form to something in his mind, and by a desire that a certain desirable emotional state should be produced. He is troubled and hampered by the complexity of conscious motives which lay claim to his attention. Such, we believe, is Mr. Murry.

The composition of a poetic drama is in fact the most difficult, the most exhausting task that a poet can set himself, and – this is the heart of the matter – it is infinitely more difficult for a poet of to-day than it was for a poet of no greater talent three hundred years ago. It is more difficult than it was for Shelley. Nor could Mr. Murry, for instance, content himself to plunge into Tudor literature and produce a *Death's Jest Book* or a *Duke of Gandia*.[3] He is too keenly aware of his precise place in time to care to perform any, however lovely, literary exercise. He wishes to do the difficult thing. It is interesting to consider why it is so difficult, and how far the difficulties disperse, and how far they direct, Mr. Murry's energies.

The difficulty is very baldly stated, as it has been stated so many times before, by saying that there is no audience. It will not do, of course, to leave the matter there. There is, "waiting" for poetry on the stage, a quite sufficient number of persons to fill a playhouse; there are even a few willing to subsidize the performance of any play of the mildest promise; there is enough effort on the part of both writers and the possible patrons and audiences. But what is needed is not sympathy or encouragement or appreciation – we need not assume that the best of the Athenian or the Elizabethan drama was "appreciated" by its audiences, relatively to the second-best – but a kind of unconscious co-operation. The ideal condition is that under which everything, except what only the individual genius can supply, is provided for the poet. A *framework* is provided. We do not mean "plot"; a poet may incorporate, adapt, or invent as he prefers or as occasion suggests. But a dramatic poet needs to have some *kind* of dramatic form given to him as the condition of his time, a form which in itself is neither good nor bad but which permits an artist to fashion it into a work of art. And by a "kind of dramatic form" one means almost the temper of the age (not the temper of a few intellectuals); a preparedness, a habit, on the part of the public, to respond in a predictable way, however crudely, to certain stimuli. A very little knowledge of Athenian or Elizabethan drama acquaints us with commonplaces, as Fate in the former, or

Death-and-Worms in the latter, which turn up again and again, and which we presume by their familiarity always evoked the proper response. Commonplaces they were, but capable of indefinite refinement.

Consider now the position of Mr. Murry, a position which we may seriously call Promethean. He has to supply his own framework, his own myth, he must do without the commonplaces which so stoutly supported even Aeschylus and Shakespeare. He must stand quite alone: which means that he must, if he can, write poetry (not merely good blank verse) *at every moment*. The strain of such an enterprise is probably responsible for inelegancies which occasionally disfigure the more relaxed passages of the play:

> . . . new-fangled tin artillery . . .
> Garlic tried *to load*
> *The patent off on me.* . . . [13]

may be appropriate speech for the rough soldier, but it is not appropriate that the same person should a few lines later remark of himself that

> to myself I seem a *wanton* child . . . [15]

This is not a blemish due to haste or carelessness. It is due to a concentration on the central interest, the focal moment of the piece, which has distracted the author's attention. There is enough evidence that Mr. Murry has studied blank verse with great care, and where he is excited he is also attentive to detail. But he is not held down by the necessity of *entertaining* an audience cruder than himself; the emotional structure is the only structure. In a dramatic structure the minor emotions, or the emotions of the minor characters, are related to the major emotions through the actions. *Cinnamon and Angelica* is deficient in dramatic structure – although the emotions (the major emotions) are dramatic.

The labour and danger do not end here. The poetic drama cannot avoid all audience. In the middle of a rowdy seventeenth-century playhouse pit the thought of Shakespeare, the feeling and the shuddering personal experience of Shakespeare moved solitary and unsoiled; solitary and free as the thought of Spinoza in his study or Montaigne in his tower. But Mr. Murry cannot escape an audience – comparatively small and comparatively cultivated – which has no dramatic habits, but desires to share, to destroy his solitude. We may suspect that Mr. Murry is aware of this audience, and that he instinctively protects himself from its intrusion by the titles which he gives his characters:

I thought I heard the spinning of the wheel
Of Destiny, and this is what she span:
Such close-knit intertexture of two hearts . . .
That even the hungry Fates must hold their shears
From so divine a pattern. [86]

The adjective "hungry" may be questioned as irrelevant to the figure; but it is a fine passage. And I quote it to ask why the author should place such language in the mouths of personages to whom he gives names like Cinnamon, Angelica, Caraway, and Vanilla Bean. The key of the music is a lovers' melancholy with many under- and over-tones; the third act is pitched at that intensity at which language strives to become silence, and the end is definitely tragic. Why these grocery names? It is a movement of protection against the cultivated audience. Whoever is acutely sensitive of the pressure of this intruder will have his own grimace or buffoonery, to avoid sentiment or to decorate sentiment so that it will no longer appear personal, but at most – safely fashionable. This concealment is a "give-away"; but we cannot say that Mr. Murry has given himself away either, for his "close-knit intertexture" is a maze of such subtilized and elusive feelings as will hardly be threaded by any but those whom he would be willing to admit.

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. Finished shortly after 19 Apr 1920, when TSE wrote to John Middleton Murry (1889-1957): "I have not quite finished my article on you; it turns out to be much longer than I expected; but I should have it for you on your return" (*L1* 462).

2. TSE assigned two of Browning's verse plays, *Pippa Passes* (1841) and *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon* (1843), when he taught Browning's dramatic and narrative poetry in his 1916 Extension lectures (1.478). He owned *The Earlier Monologues of Robert Browning* (London: J. M. Dent, 1900) as well as vols 1-8 of the twelve-volume edition of Browning's *Complete Works*, ed. Charlotte Porter and Helen Clarke (New York: Crowell, 1898).

3. Thomas Lovell Beddoes's *Death's Jest Book; or, The Fool's Tragedy* (1850) is set in late thirteenth-century Egypt and Silesia and relies on conventions of Jacobean revenge tragedy. Swinburne's late play, *The Duke of Gandia* (1908), is set in fifteenth-century Rome and is informed by his studies in Elizabethan drama.

Philip Massinger[1]

I

Massinger has been more fortunately and more fairly judged than several of his greater contemporaries. Three critics have done their best by him: the notes of Coleridge exemplify Coleridge's fine and fragmentary perceptions; the essay of Leslie Stephen is a piece of formidable destructive analysis; and the essay of Swinburne is Swinburne's criticism at its best.[2] None of these, probably, has put Massinger finally and irrefutably into a place.[3†]

English criticism is inclined to argue or persuade rather than to state; and, instead of forcing the subject to expose himself, these critics have left in their work an undissolved residuum of their own good taste, which, however impeccable, is something that requires our faith. The principles which animate this taste remain unexplained. Canon Cruickshank's book is a work of scholarship; and the advantage of good scholarship is that it presents us with evidence which is an invitation to the critical faculty of the reader: it bestows a method, rather than a judgment.[4†]

It is difficult – it is perhaps the supreme difficulty of criticism – to make the facts generalize themselves; but Mr. Cruickshank at least presents us with facts which are capable of generalization. This is a service of value; and it is therefore wholly a compliment to the author to say that his appendices are as valuable as the essay itself.

The sort of labour to which Mr. Cruickshank has devoted himself is one that professed critics ought more willingly to undertake. It is an important part of criticism, more important than any mere expression of opinion. To understand Elizabethan drama it is necessary to study a dozen playwrights at once, to dissect with all care the complex growth, to ponder collaboration to the utmost line. Reading Shakespeare and several of his contemporaries is pleasure enough, perhaps all the pleasure possible, for most. But if we wish to consummate and refine this pleasure by understanding it, to distil the last drop of it, to press and press the essence of each author, to apply exact measurement to our own sensations, then we must compare; and we cannot compare without parcelling the threads of authorship and

influence. We must employ Mr. Cruickshank's judgments;[5†] and perhaps the most important judgment to which he has committed himself is this:

> Massinger, in his grasp of stagecraft, his flexible metre, his desire in the sphere of ethics to exploit both vice and virtue, is typical of an age which had much culture, but which, without being exactly corrupt, lacked moral fibre. [19]

Here, in fact, is our text: to elucidate this sentence would be to account for Massinger. We begin vaguely with good taste, by a recognition that Massinger is inferior: can we trace this inferiority, dissolve it, and have left any element of merit?

We turn first to the parallel quotations from Massinger and Shakespeare collocated by Mr. Cruickshank to make manifest Massinger's indebtedness. One of the surest of tests is the way in which a poet borrows. Immature poets imitate; mature poets steal; bad poets deface what they take, and good poets make it into something better, or at least something different. The good poet welds his theft into a whole of feeling which is unique, utterly different from that from which it was torn; the bad poet throws it into something which has no cohesion. A good poet will usually borrow from authors remote in time, or alien in language, or diverse in interest. Chapman borrowed from Seneca; Shakespeare and Webster from Montaigne. The two great followers of Shakespeare, Webster and Tourneur, in their mature work do not borrow from him; he is too close to them to be of use to them in this way. Massinger, as Mr. Cruickshank shows, borrows from Shakespeare a good deal. Let us profit by some of the quotations with which he has provided us –

Massinger:

> Can I call back yesterday, with all their aids
> That bow unto my sceptre? or restore
> My mind to that tranquillity and peace
> It then enjoyed?

Shakespeare:

> Not poppy, nor mandragora,
> Nor all the drowsy syrops of the world

> Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
> Which thou owedst yesterday.[6]

Massinger's is a general rhetorical question, the language just and pure, but colourless. Shakespeare's has particular significance; and the adjective "drowsy" and the verb "medicine" infuse a precise vigour. This is, on Massinger's part, an echo, rather than an imitation or a plagiarism – the basest, because least conscious form of borrowing. "Drowsy syrop" is a condensation of meaning frequent in Shakespeare, but rare in Massinger.

Massinger:

> Thou didst not borrow of Vice her indirect,
> Crooked, and abject means.

Shakespeare:

> God knows, my son,
> By what by-paths and indirect crook'd ways
> I met this crown.[7]

Here, again, Massinger gives the general forensic statement, Shakespeare the particular image. "Indirect crook'd" is forceful in Shakespeare; a mere pleonasm in Massinger. "Crook'd ways" is a metaphor; Massinger's phrase only the ghost of a metaphor.

Massinger:

> And now, in the evening,
> When thou should'st pass with honour to thy rest,
> Wilt thou fall like a meteor?

Shakespeare:

> I shall fall
> Like a bright exhalation in the evening,
> And no man see me more.[8]

Here the lines of Massinger have their own beauty. Still, a "bright exhalation" appears to the eye and makes us catch our breath in the evening; "meteor" is a dim simile; the word is worn.

Massinger:

> What you deliver to me shall be lock'd up
> In a strong cabinet, of which you yourself
> Shall keep the key.

Shakespeare:

> 'Tis in my memory locked,
> And you yourself shall keep the key of it.[9]

In the preceding passage Massinger had squeezed his simile to death, here he drags it round the city at his heels; and how swift Shakespeare's figure is! We may add two more passages, not given by our commentator; here the model is Webster. They occur on the same page, an artless confession.

> Here he comes,
> His nose held up; he hath something in the wind,

is hardly comparable to "the Cardinal lifts up his nose like a foul porpoise before a storm,"[10†] and when we come upon

> as tann'd galley-slaves
> Pay such as do redeem them from the oar

it is unnecessary to turn up the great lines in the *Duchess of Malfy*.[11†] Massinger fancied this galley-slave; for he comes with his oar again in the *Bondman* –

> Never did galley-slave shake off his chains,
> Or look'd on his redemption from the oar. . . .[12]

Now these are mature plays; and the *Roman Actor* (from which we have drawn the two previous extracts) is said to have been the preferred play of its author.[13]

We may conclude directly from these quotations that Massinger's feeling for language had outstripped his feeling for things; that his eye and his vocabulary were not in co-operation.[14†] One of the greatest distinctions of several of his elder contemporaries – we name Middleton, Webster, Tourneur – is a gift for combining, for fusing into a single phrase, two or more diverse impressions.

> . . . in her strong toil of grace[15]

of Shakespeare is such a fusion; the metaphor identifies itself with what suggests it; the resultant is one and is unique –

> Does the silk worm *expend* her *yellow labours*? . . .
> Why does yon fellow *falsify highways*
> And lays his life between the judge's lips
> To *refine* such a one? keeps horse and men
> To *beat their valours* for her?[16]

> Let the common sewer take it from distinction. . . .[17]

> Lust and forgetfulness have been amongst us. . . .[18]

These lines of Tourneur and of Middleton exhibit that perpetual slight alteration of language, words perpetually juxtaposed in new and sudden combinations, meanings perpetually *eingeschachtelt*[19] into meanings, which evidences a very high development of the senses, a development of the English language which we have perhaps never equalled. And, indeed, with the end of Chapman, Middleton, Webster, Tourneur, Donne we end a period when the intellect was immediately at the tips of the senses. Sensation became word and word was sensation. The next period is the period of Milton (though still with a Marvell in it); and this period is initiated by Massinger.

It is not that the word becomes less exact. Massinger is, in a wholly eulogistic sense, choice and correct. And the decay of the senses is not inconsistent with a greater sophistication of language. But every vital development in language is a development of feeling as well. The verse of Shakespeare and the major Shakespearian dramatists is an innovation of this kind, a true mutation of species. The verse practised by Massinger is a different verse from that of his predecessors; but it is not a development based on, or resulting from, a new way of feeling. On the contrary, it seems to lead us away from feeling altogether.

We mean that Massinger must be placed as much at the beginning of one period as at the end of another. A certain Boyle, quoted by Mr. Cruickshank, says that Milton's blank verse owes much to the study of Massinger's.

> In the indefinable touches which make up the music of a verse [says Boyle], in the artistic distribution of pauses, and in the unerring choice and grouping of just those words which strike the ear as the perfection

> of harmony, there are, if we leave Cyril Tourneur's *Atheist's Tragedy* out of the question, only two masters in the drama, Shakspere in his latest period and Massinger.[20]

This Boyle must have had a singular ear to have preferred Tourneur's secondary work to his *Revenger's Tragedy*,[21†] and one must think that he had never glanced at Ford. But though the appraisal be ludicrous, the praise is not undeserved. Mr. Cruickshank has given us an excellent example of Massinger's syntax –

> What though my father
> Writ man before he was so, and confirm'd it,
> By numbering that day no part of his life
> In which he did not service to his country;
> Was he to be free therefore from the laws
> And ceremonious form in your decrees?
> Or else because he did as much as man
> In those three memorable overthrows,
> At Granson, Morat, Nancy, where his master,
> The warlike Charalois, with whose misfortunes
> I bear his name, lost treasure, men, and life,
> To be excused from payment of those sums
> Which (his own patrimony spent) his zeal
> To serve his country forced him to take up?[22†]

It is impossible to deny the masterly construction of this passage; perhaps there is not one living poet who could do the like. It is impossible to deny the originality. The language is pure and correct, free from muddiness or turbidity. Massinger does not confuse metaphors, or heap them one upon another. He is lucid, though not easy. But if Massinger's age, "without being exactly corrupt, lacks moral fibre," Massinger's verse, without being exactly corrupt, suffers from cerebral anaemia. To say that an involved style is necessarily a bad style would be preposterous. But such a style should follow the involutions of a mode of perceiving, registering, and digesting impressions which is also involved. It is to be feared that the feeling of Massinger is simple and overlaid with received ideas. Had Massinger had a nervous system as refined as that of Middleton, Tourneur, Webster, or Ford, his style would be a triumph. But such a nature was not at hand, and Massinger precedes, not another Shakespeare, but Milton.

Massinger is, in fact, at a further remove from Shakespeare than that other precursor of Milton – John Fletcher.[23] Fletcher was above all an opportunist, in his verse, in his momentary effects, never quite a pastiche; in his structure ready to sacrifice everything to the single scene. To Fletcher, because he was more intelligent, less will be forgiven. Fletcher had a cunning guess at feelings, and betrayed them; Massinger was unconscious and innocent. As an artisan of the theatre he is not inferior to Fletcher, and his best tragedies have an honester unity than *Bonduca*. But the unity is superficial. In the *Roman Actor* the development of parts is out of all proportion to the central theme; in the *Unnatural Combat*, in spite of the deft handling of suspense and the quick shift from climax to a new suspense, the first part of the play is the hatred of Malefort for his son and the second part is his passion for his daughter. It is theatrical skill, not an artistic conscience arranging emotions, that holds the two parts together. In the *Duke of Milan* the appearance of Sforza at the Court of his conqueror only delays the action, or rather breaks the emotional rhythm. And we have named three of Massinger's best.[24]

A dramatist who so skilfully welds together parts which have no reason for being together, who fabricates plays so well knit and so remote from unity, we should expect to exhibit the same synthetic cunning in character. Mr. Cruickshank, Coleridge, and Leslie Stephen are pretty well agreed that Massinger is no master of characterization. You can, in fact, put together heterogeneous parts to form a lively play; but a character, to be living, must be conceived from some emotional unity. A character is not to be composed of scattered observations of human nature, but of parts which are felt together. Hence it is that although Massinger's failure to draw a moving character is no greater than his failure to make a whole play, and probably springs from the same defective sensitiveness, yet the failure in character is more conspicuous and more disastrous. A "living" character is not necessarily "true to life." It is a person whom we can see and hear, whether he be true or false to human nature as we know it. What the creator of character needs is not so much knowledge of motives as keen sensibility; the dramatist need not understand people; but he must be exceptionally aware of them. This awareness was not given to Massinger. He inherits the traditions of conduct, female chastity, hymeneal sanctity, the fashion of honour, without either criticizing or informing them from his own experience. In the earlier drama these conventions are merely a framework, or an alloy necessary for working the metal; the metal itself consisted of unique

emotions resulting inevitably from the circumstances, resulting or inhering as inevitably as the properties of a chemical compound. Middleton's heroine, for instance, in *The Changeling*, exclaims in the well-known words –

> Why, 'tis impossible thou canst be so wicked,
> To shelter such a cunning cruelty
> To make his death the murderer of my honour![25]

The word "honour" in such a situation is out of date, but the emotion of Beatrice at that moment, given the conditions, is as permanent and substantial as anything in human nature. The emotion of Othello in Act V is the emotion of a man who discovers that the worst part of his own soul has been exploited by someone more clever than he; it is this emotion carried by the writer to a very high degree of intensity. Even in so late and so decayed a drama as that of Ford, the framework of emotions and morals of the time is only the vehicle for statements of feeling which are unique and imperishable: Ford's and Ford's only.

What may be considered corrupt or decadent in the morals of Massinger is not an alteration or diminution in morals; it is simply the disappearance of all the personal and real emotions which this morality supported and into which it introduced a kind of order. As soon as the emotions disappear the morality which ordered it appears hideous. Puritanism itself became repulsive only when it appeared as the survival of a restraint after the feelings which it restrained had gone. When Massinger's ladies resist temptation they do not appear to undergo any important emotion; they merely know what is expected of them; they manifest themselves to us as lubricious prudes. Any age has its conventions; and any age might appear absurd when its conventions get into the hands of a man like Massinger – a man, we mean, of so exceptionally superior a literary talent as Massinger's, and so paltry an imagination. The Elizabethan morality was an important convention; important because it was not consciously of one social class alone, because it provided a framework for emotions to which all classes could respond, and it hindered no feeling. It was not hypocritical, and it did not suppress; its dark corners are haunted by the ghost of Mary Fitton and perhaps greater.[26] It is a subject which has not been sufficiently investigated. Fletcher and Massinger rendered it ridiculous; not by not believing it, but because they were men of great talents who could not vivify it; because they could not fit into it passionate, complete human characters.

The tragedy of Massinger is interesting chiefly according to the definition given before; the highest degree of verbal excellence compatible with the most rudimentary development of the senses. Massinger succeeds better in something which is not tragedy; in the romantic comedy. *A Very Woman* deserves all the praise that Swinburne, with his almost unerring gift of selection, has bestowed upon it.[27] The probable collaboration of Fletcher had the happiest result; for certainly that admirable comic personage, the tipsy Borachia, is handled with more humour than we expect of Massinger. It is a play which would be enjoyable on the stage. The form, however, of romantic comedy is itself inferior and decadent. There is an inflexibility about the poetic drama which is by no means a matter of classical, or neoclassical, or pseudo-classical law. The poetic drama might develop forms highly different from those of Greece or England, India or Japan. Conceded the utmost freedom, the romantic drama would yet remain inferior. The poetic drama must have an emotional unity, let the emotion be whatever you like. It must have a dominant tone; and if this be strong enough, the most heterogeneous emotions may be made to reinforce it. The romantic comedy is a skilful concoction of inconsistent emotion, a *revue* of emotion. *A Very Woman* is surpassingly well plotted. The debility of romantic drama does not depend upon extravagant setting, or preposterous events, or inconceivable coincidences: all these might be found in a serious tragedy or comedy. It consists in an internal incoherence of feelings, a concatenation of emotions which signifies nothing.[28]

From this type of play, so eloquent of emotional disorder, there was no swing back of the pendulum. Changes never come by a simple reinfusion into the form which the life has just left. The romantic drama was not a new form. Massinger dealt not with emotions so much as with the social abstractions of emotions, more generalized and therefore more quickly and easily interchangeable within the confines of a single action. He was not guided by direct communications through the nerves. Romantic drama tended, accordingly, toward what is sometimes called the "typical," but which is not the truly typical; for the *typical* figure in a drama is always particularized – an individual. The tendency of the romantic drama was towards a form which continued it in removing its more conspicuous vices, was towards a more severe external order. This form was the Heroic Drama. We look into Dryden's "Essay on Heroic Plays," and we find that "love and

valour ought to be the subject of an heroic poem."[29] Massinger, in his destruction of the old drama, had prepared the way for Dryden. The intellect had perhaps exhausted the old conventions. It was not able to supply the impoverishment of feeling.

Such are the reflections aroused by an examination of some of Massinger's plays in the light of Mr. Cruickshank's statement that Massinger's age "had much culture, but, without being exactly corrupt, lacked moral fibre." The statement may be supported. In order to fit into our estimate of Massinger the two admirable comedies – *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* and *The City Madam* – a more extensive research would be required than is possible within our limits.[30]

II

Massinger's tragedy may be summarized for the unprepared reader as being very dreary.[31†] It is dreary, unless one is prepared by a somewhat extensive knowledge of his livelier contemporaries to grasp without fatigue precisely the elements in it which are capable of giving pleasure; or unless one is incited by a curious interest in versification. In comedy, however, Massinger was one of the few masters in the language. He was a master in a comedy which is serious, even sombre; and in one aspect of it there are only two names to mention with his: those of Marlowe and Jonson. In comedy, as a matter of fact, a greater variety of methods were discovered and employed than in tragedy. The method of Kyd, as developed by Shakespeare, was the standard for English tragedy down to Otway and to Shelley.[32] But both individual temperament, and varying epochs, made more play with comedy. The comedy of Lyly is one thing; that of Shakespeare, followed by Beaumont and Fletcher, is another; and that of Middleton is a third. And Massinger, while he has his own comedy, is nearer to Marlowe and Jonson than to any of these.

Massinger was, in fact, as a comic writer, fortunate in the moment at which he wrote. His comedy is transitional; but it happens to be one of those transitions which contain some merit not anticipated by predecessors or refined upon by later writers. The comedy of Jonson is nearer to caricature; that of Middleton a more photographic delineation of low life. Massinger is nearer to Restoration comedy, and more like his contemporary, Shirley, in assuming a certain social level, certain distinctions of class, as a postulate of his comedy. This resemblance to later comedy is also the

important point of difference between Massinger and earlier comedy. But Massinger's comedy differs just as widely from the comedy of manners proper; he is closer to that in his romantic drama – in *A Very Woman* – than in *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*; in his comedy his interest is not in the follies of love-making or the absurdities of social pretence, but in the unmasking of villainy. Just as the Old Comedy of Molière differs in principle from the New Comedy of Marivaux, so the Old Comedy of Massinger differs from the New Comedy of his contemporary Shirley.[33] And as in France, so in England, the more farcical comedy was the more serious. Massinger's great comic rogues, Sir Giles Overreach and Luke Frugal, are members of the large English family which includes Barabas and Sir Epicure Mammon, and from which Sir Tunbelly Clumsy claims descent.[34]

What distinguishes Massinger from Marlowe and Jonson is in the main an inferiority. The greatest comic characters of these two dramatists are slight work in comparison with Shakespeare's best – Falstaff has a third dimension and Epicure Mammon has only two. But this slightness is part of the nature of the art which Jonson practised, a smaller art than Shakespeare's. The inferiority of Massinger to Jonson is an inferiority, not of one type of art to another, but within Jonson's type. It is a simple deficiency. Marlowe's and Jonson's comedies were a view of life; they were, as great literature is, the transformation of a personality into a personal work of art, their lifetime's work, long or short. Massinger is not simply a smaller personality: his personality hardly exists. He did not, out of his own personality, build a world of art, as Shakespeare and Marlowe and Jonson built.

In the fine pages which Remy de Gourmont devotes to Flaubert in his *Problème du Style*, the great critic declares:

> La vie est un dépouillement. Le but de l'activité propre d'un homme est de nettoyer sa personnalité, de la laver de toutes le souillures qu'y déposa l'éducation, de la dégager de toutes les empreintes qu'y laissèrent nos admirations adolescentes;[35]

and again:

> Flaubert incorporait toute sa sensibilité à ses œuvres. . . . Hors de ses livres, où il se transvasait goutte à goutte, jusqu'à la lie, Flaubert est fort peu intéressant.[36]

Of Shakespeare notably, of Jonson less, of Marlowe (and of Keats to the term of life allowed him), one can say that they *se transvasaient goutte à*

goutte; and in England, which has produced a prodigious number of men of genius and comparatively few works of art, there are not many writers of whom one can say it. Certainly not of Massinger. A brilliant master of technique, he was not, in this profound sense, an artist. And so we come to inquire how, if this is so, he could have written two great comedies. We shall probably be obliged to conclude that a large part of their excellence is, in some way which should be defined, fortuitous; and that therefore they are, however remarkable, not works of perfect art.

This objection raised by Leslie Stephen to Massinger's method of revealing a villain has great cogency;[37†] but I am inclined to believe that the cogency is due to a somewhat different reason from that which Leslie Stephen assigns.[38] His statement is too *apriorist* to be quite trustworthy. There is no reason why a comedy or a tragedy villain should not declare himself, and in as long a period as the author likes; but the sort of villain who may run on in this way is a simple villain (simple not *simpliste*). Barabas and Volpone can declare their character, because they have no inside; appearance and reality are coincident; they are forces in particular directions. Massinger's two villains are not simple. Giles Overreach is essentially a great force directed upon small objects; a great force, a small mind; the terror of a dozen parishes instead of the conqueror of a world. The force is misapplied, attenuated, thwarted, by the man's vulgarity: he is a great man of the City, without fear, but with the most abject awe of the aristocracy. He is accordingly not simple, but a product of a certain civilization, and he is not wholly conscious. His monologues are meant to be, not what he thinks he is, but what he really is: and yet they are not the truth about him, and he himself certainly does not know the truth. To declare himself, therefore, is impossible.

> Nay, when my ears are pierced with widows' cries,
> And undone orphans wash with tears my threshold,
> I only think what 'tis to have my daughter
> Right honourable; and 'tis a powerful charm
> Makes me insensible of remorse, or pity,
> Or the least sting of conscience.[39]

This is the wrong note. Elsewhere we have the right:

> Thou art a fool;
> In being out of office, I am out of danger;

Where, if I were a justice, besides the trouble,
I might or out of wilfulness, or error,
Run myself finely into a praemunire,
And so become a prey to the informer,
No, I'll have none of 't; 'tis enough I keep
Greedy at my devotion: so he serve
My purposes, let him hang, or damn, I care not . . .[40]

And how well tuned, well modulated, here, the diction! The man is audible and visible. But from passages like the first we may be permitted to infer that Massinger was unconscious of trying to develop a different kind of character from any that Marlowe or Jonson had invented.

Luke Frugal, in *The City Madam*, is not so great a character as Sir Giles Overreach. But Luke Frugal just misses being almost the greatest of all hypocrites. His humility in the first act of the play is more than half real. The error in his portraiture is not the extravagant hocus-pocus of supposed Indian necromancers by which he is so easily duped, but the premature disclosure of villainy in his temptation of the two apprentices of his brother. But for this, he would be a perfect chameleon of circumstance. Here, again, we feel that Massinger was conscious only of inventing a rascal of the old simpler farce type. But the play is not a farce, in the sense in which *The Jew of Malta*, *The Alchemist*, *Bartholomew Fair* are farces. Massinger had not the personality to create great farce, and he was too serious to invent trivial farce. The ability to perform that slight distortion of *all* the elements in the world of a play or a story, so that this world is complete in itself, which was given to Marlowe and Jonson (and to Rabelais) and which is prerequisite to great farce, was denied to Massinger. On the other hand, his temperament was more closely related to theirs than to that of Shirley or the Restoration wits. His two comedies therefore occupy a place by themselves. His ways of thinking and feeling isolate him from both the Elizabethan and the later Caroline mind. He might almost have been a great realist; he is killed by conventions which were suitable for the preceding literary generation, but not for his. Had Massinger been a greater man, a man of more intellectual courage, the current of English literature immediately after him might have taken a different course. The defect is precisely a defect of personality. He is not, however, the only man of letters who, at the moment when a new view of life is wanted, has looked at life through the eyes of his predecessors, and only at manners through his own.

NOTES

1. As printed in *SE*; parts I and II, first revised and combined in *SW*, were originally published separately as "Philip Massinger," *TLS*, 958 (27 May 1920), 325-26, and "The Old Comedy," *The Athenaeum*, 4702 (11 June 1920), 760-61, both reviews of *Philip Massinger*, by A. H. Cruickshank (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1920). Pp. vii + 228. A. H. Cruickshank (1862-1927), Canon of Durham and Professor at the University of Durham, was also author of *The Future of Greek* (1917) and editor of Euripides's *Bacchae* (1893).

2. Coleridge discusses Massinger in section V of "Lectures and Notes of 1818," *Lectures and Notes on Shakespeare and Other English Poets*. In "Massinger" (1877), Leslie Stephen (1832-1904) ranks the playwright's work "below the level of his greatest contemporaries" and argues that it lacks "vital force." *Hours in a Library: Third Series* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1879), 48. Swinburne's "Philip Massinger" (1919) refutes the charges of both Coleridge and Stephen: "there can be no question that the fame of Philip Massinger is secure against all chance of oblivion or eclipse" (209); Swinburne's defense appeared posthumously in *Contemporaries of Shakespeare*, which TSE reviewed (115).

3†. In *TLS*: "into a place; and if we still aspire to settle this distinguished and unread playwright, we shall find Professor Cruickshank's book more useful, perhaps, than any of them."

4†. In *TLS* (without paragraph break): "rather than a judgement. Mr. Cruickshank, like most scholars, feels obliged to offer some undeveloped generalizations which do not attach themselves at once to his evidence. It is difficult"

5†. In *TLS*: "We must employ Mr. Cruickshank's method to examine Mr. Cruickshank's judgments; and perhaps"

6. *The Emperor of the East* V.ii.101-04, and *Othello* III.iii.333-36; Cruickshank gives these and the following paired sets of excerpts in "Appendix IV: On the Influence of Shakespere" (163-68).

7. *The Duke of Milan* III.i.204-05, and 2 *Henry IV* IV.v.184-86.

8. *The Virgin Martyr* V.ii.158-60, and *Henry VIII* III.ii.226-28.

9. *The Great Duke of Florence* III.i.58-60, and *Hamlet* I.iii.85-86.

10†. In *TLS*: "like a a foul porpoise that smells the storm"

11†. In *TLS* and *SW*: "*Duchess of Malfi*"

TSE compares two excerpts from Massinger's *The Roman Actor* (IV.i.51-52, 75-76) – which appear on the same page in his edition, *The Dramatic Works of Massinger and Ford* (London: George Routledge, 1875), 157 – to two passages from *The Duchess of Malfi*, "he lifts up's nose, like a foul porpoise before a storm" (III.iii.62-63) and "I am acquainted with sad misery / As the tann'd galley-slave is with his oar" (IV.ii.34-35).

12. Massinger, *The Bondman* IV.iii.77-78.

13. Cruickshank observes that *The Roman Actor* (1629) was the work "which Massinger himself at one time esteemed the most highly," citing the play's dedication, which reads "I ever held this the most perfect birth of my Minerva" (126).

14†. In *TLS*: "were not in close cooperation"

15. At the end of *Antony and Cleopatra*, Caesar looks on the body of the queen and exclaims, "she looks like sleep, / As she would catch another Antony / In her strong toil of grace" (V. ii.344-46). TSE quoted the same line in "Studies in Contemporary Criticism" (1918), where he argued that it "makes available some of that physical source of energy upon which the life of language depends": "you can hardly say where the metaphorical and the literal meet" (1.762).

16. *The Revenger's Tragedy* III.v.72; 76-77; *read*: "silkworm" and "highways / And put his life between the judge's lips / To refine such a thing, keeps"

17. Thomas Middleton and William Rowley, *The Changeling* V.iii.153.

18. Thomas Middleton, *Women Beware Women* V.i.184. *Read*: "forgetfulness has been"; quoted accurately in the *TLS* review but revised in *SW*.

19. *eingeschachtelt*: enclosed by, nestled within (as with a small box within a larger one); TSE may have drawn the term from logician Adolf Stöhr, who uses it throughout his *Lehrbuch der Logik* (1910) to describe how certain concepts are contained within related ones.

20. Cruickshank, 55. Quoted from Robert Boyle (b. 1842), "Massinger and The Two Noble Kinsmen," *The New Shakspere Society's Transactions, 1880-86* (London: Trübner, 1886), 378. Boyle was known for his denial of Shakespeare's authorship of *Henry VIII*; he contributed the entry on Massinger in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol 36 (1894).

21†. In *TLS* and *SW*: "Tourneur's apprentice work"

Contemporary scholars consider Middleton the author of *The Revenger's Tragedy*, which was published anonymously in 1607 and attributed to Tourneur fifty years later.

22†. In *TLS* and *SW*: "to take up!"

The Fatal Dowry I.ii.162-175; quoted in Cruickshank, 49.

23. TSE wrote to Middleton Murry on 19 Apr: "Did I hear you say once you had a Beaumont and Fletcher complete you were willing to dispose of? I should like to buy it from you . . . I need a B & F for my Massinger article and want to own one and can't get one anywhere" (*L1* 462).

24. Fletcher, *Bonduca* (1647); Massinger, *The Unnatural Combat* (1639); *The Duke of Milan* (1623).

25. *The Changeling* III.iv.123-25. Beatrice addresses the servant De Flores, who at her bidding has just murdered her unwanted suitor but now demands her love in payment for the crime. In his later essay on Middleton, TSE quotes these lines again and reiterates the play's emotional permanence: "the tragedy of *The Changeling* is an eternal tragedy, as permanent as *Oedipus* or *Antony and Cleopatra*; it is the tragedy of the not naturally bad but irresponsible and undeveloped nature, caught in the consequences of its own action" (*SE* 163).

26. Maid of honor to Elizabeth I and onetime candidate for Shakespeare's "Dark Lady," Mary Fitton became the subject of great scandal and incurred the queen's wrath when she bore an illegitimate son to William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, who was imprisoned as a result. TSE had read about her recently when he reviewed *Essays in Romantic Literature* by George Wyndham, who recounts her story as an example of the "shadows in the hey-day pageantry" of Elizabeth's Court, which resembled the "trappings and intrigues of the Stage" (279).

27. Swinburne calls Massinger's *A Very Woman* (1655) "the flower of all his flock" and "full of a peculiarly sweet and fascinating interest" in *Contemporaries of Shakespeare* (1919), which TSE recently reviewed. Swinburne senses in it the "peculiar cadence" of Fletcher's verse but concludes that its "utter absence of his besetting faults" makes him an unlikely collaborator. (207-08).

28. Cf. *Macbeth* V.v.26-28: "a tale / Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, / Signifying nothing."

29. In "Of Heroic Plays" (1672), Dryden writes: "an heroic play ought to be an imitation, in little, of an heroic poem; and consequently . . . love and valour ought to be the subject of it." TSE marked this passage on page 89 in his copy of Dryden's *Dramatic Essays* (London: Dent, 1912), which is inscribed "T. S. Eliot / Apr 1920."

30. *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* (1633); *The City Madam* (1658). The *TLS* review ended here.

31†. In *Ath*, the review began with the following paragraph, which was deleted in *SW*: "In this country the co-operation between scholarship and criticism has never been so efficient as it has in France. Mr. Cruickshank modestly hopes that his book on Massinger will stimulate the production of similar books on other writers of the period. The ignorance of English literature is very great; and we search our breasts in vain for an echo to his hope; the most we can expect is that subsequent writers on Massinger will be forced to recognize the existence of Mr. Cruickshank's book. For it is a conscientious work, which contains, we suppose, all the information, and nearly all the serious speculations possible, about its subject. In expression of judgment and comparison, it is useful; for if any opinion is to be expressed of Mr. Cruickshank's criticism, it is deficient rather than aberrant. It will lead no one astray and it ought to provoke reflection."

32. Restoration dramatist Thomas Otway (1652-85), author of *Don Carlos, Prince of Spain* (1676), *Venice Preserv'd; or, A Plot Discover'd* (1682), and others.

33. TSE uses the distinction between "Old" and "New Comedy" – which originally designated the early and later periods of Greek Comedy, represented by Aristophanes's fifth-century satires of public figures and events and Menander's later plays about domestic quarrels and affairs – to differentiate between the public, political satire of Molière and Massinger and the comedy of manners by Marivaux and Shirley. He comments at length on the differences between Molière and Marivaux in "Marivaux" (1).

34. TSE's family of comic villains includes Sir Giles Overreach and Luke Frugal in Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* and *The City Madam*, respectively, Barabas in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, Epicure Mammon in Jonson's *The Alchemist*, and Tunbelly Clumsy, a character in both John Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696) and R. B. Sheridan's *A Trip to Scarborough* (1777).

35. *Trans*: "Life is a process of stripping. The end of man's own activity is to clean his personality, to wash from it all the stains left on it by education, to free it from all the imprints imposed on it by adolescent admirations." From chapter 7 of *Le Problème du style* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1902), 104. Trans. Richard Aldington, *Remy de Gourmont*, 2:427-28. Pound quoted this passage in its entirety in "De Gourmont: A Distinction" in a special issue of *The Little Review* (Feb-Mar 1919) devoted to the French critic.

36. *Trans*: "Flaubert incorporated all his sensibility in his works; . . . Outside his books, wherein he transfused himself drop by drop to the dregs, Flaubert is not very interesting." *Le Problème du style* (107). Trans. Aldington, Remy de Gourmont, 2:430.

37†. In *Ath*: "The objection raised"

38. Leslie Stephen suggests in *Hours in a Library* that the lengthy declarations of a villain like Giles Overeach "are clearly what other people would think about him, not what he would really think, still less what he would say, of himself." This makes Massinger's villains "appear like drunkards or madmen," Stephen concludes, and it makes his plays seem "a continuous declamation, cut up into fragments and assigned to the different actors" (36).

39. *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* IV.i.126-131. Leslie Stephen quotes this passage and calls it "a very fine speech" in his discussion of Giles Overreach's place among Massinger's villains (35).

40. *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* II.i.13-21.

Artists and Men of Genius

To the Editor of *The Athenaeum*

The Athenaeum, 4704 (25 June 1920) 842

Sir, – Mr. William H. Polack's perplexity (*Athenaeum*, June 18, p. 810) is a spectacle before which it is impossible for me to remain passive.[1] He encourages me by saying that he is anxious to learn; and if the knowledge of what I do not believe is a possession which he would dignify with the name of learning, he is welcome to it.

First, then, I am not in the least "indifferent as to what is expressed." If I were, I might have a higher opinion of Massinger; for if Mr. Polack has done me the honour of reading that review, he must see that my judgment at that point was simply that Massinger had very little personality – very little to express.[2] This misunderstanding is related to the other. I do not believe that a work of art is *any* "complete and precise expression of personality." There are all sorts of expressions of personality, complete or precise or both, which have nothing to do with art; so that the phrase seems to me of very little use for literary criticism. Mr. Polack will notice furthermore that I said in my article "transformation," *not* "expression."[3] Transformation is what I meant: the creation of a work of art is like some other forms of creation, a painful and unpleasant business; it is a sacrifice of the man to the work, it is a kind of death.

I should be glad if Mr. Polack would study my quotations from Gourmont in their context in the *Problème du Style*, and also Dujardin's *Stéphane Mallarmé* (Mercure de France).[4]

Mr. Polack "feels that T. S. E. deplores the fact that Dickens was not an artist." I feel that Mr. Polack's feelings have run away with him. (So look'd he once, when in an angry parle He smote . . .)[5] But if Mr. Polack is again mistaken, what then?

I am, Sir,
Your obliged obedient servant,

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. In his letter of 18 June 1920, Polack pointed out a discrepancy between TSE's "The Old Comedy" (now a part of "Philip Massinger" [244]) and John Middleton Murry's "Charles Dickens (1812-1870)," both in the previous issue. He recapitulated TSE's position: "Apparently T. S. E. considers a work of art that into which the artist 'decants himself drop by drop,' in Remy de Gourmont's phrase. I take it that this may be paraphrased as 'a complete and precise expression of personality.'" And he offered a statement of the contrast: "I think that the underlying opposition could be fairly stated in these terms. T. S. E. is indifferent as to what is expressed, provided the expression be complete and precise, whereas M. hints that the point to which criticism should apply itself is the nature of that which is expressed. . . . To put it in a nutshell. I feel that T. S. E. deplores the fact that Dickens was not an artist, but (perhaps) a man of genius; while M. thanks God for it. . . . What would they say to each other or to us about Shakespeare?" (810). Grover Smith suggests that TSE himself may have pseudonymously written the letter to which he responds here. *The Waste Land* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1983), 24.

2. "Massinger is not simply a smaller personality: his personality hardly exists" (254).

3. "Marlowe's and Jonson's comedies were a view of life; they were, as great literature is, the transformation of a personality into a personal work of art" (254).

4. TSE would have seen Richard Aldington's review of *De Stéphane Mallarmé au prophète Ezéchiel, et Essai d'une théorie du réalisme symbolique* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1919) by Édouard Dujardin (1861-1949) in *Poetry* (June 1920), which also featured a review of his own *Poems* (1920). Aldington writes, "Perhaps America will read and profit by M. Dujardin's wisdom," and he translates at length from Dujardin: "Practically, there is only one way to write well – that is to think personally. . . . Form and matter are vain words; there is only style."

5. *Hamlet* I.i.65-67: "So frown'd he once, when in an angry parle / He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice. / 'Tis strange."

The Perfect Critic[1]

I

"Ériger en lois ses impressions personnelles, c'est le grand effort d'un homme s'il est sincère." – *Lettres à l'Amazone*.[2]

Coleridge was perhaps the greatest[3†] of English critics, and in a sense the last. After Coleridge we have Matthew Arnold; but Arnold – I think it will be conceded – was rather a propagandist for criticism than a critic, a popularizer rather than a creator of ideas. So long as this island remains an island (and we are no nearer the Continent than were Arnold's contemporaries) the work of Arnold will be important; it is still a bridge across the Channel, and it will always have been good sense. Since Arnold's attempt to correct his countrymen, English criticism has followed two directions. When a distinguished critic observed recently, in a newspaper article, that "poetry is the most highly organized form of intellectual activity," we were conscious that we were reading neither Coleridge nor Arnold.[4] Not only have the words "organized" and "activity," occurring together in this phrase, that familiar vague suggestion of the scientific vocabulary which is characteristic of modern writing, but one asked questions which Coleridge and Arnold would not have permitted one to ask. How is it, for instance, that poetry is more "highly organized" than astronomy, physics, or pure mathematics, which we imagine to be, in relation to the scientist who practises them, "intellectual activity" of a pretty highly organized type? "Mere strings of words," our critic continues with felicity and truth, "flung like dabs of paint across a blank canvas, may awaken surprise . . . but have no significance whatever in the history of literature." The phrases by which Arnold is best known may be inadequate, they may assemble more doubts than they dispel, but they usually have some meaning. And if a phrase like "the most highly organized form of intellectual activity" is the highest organization of thought of which contemporary criticism, in a distinguished representative, is capable, then, we conclude, modern criticism is degenerate.

The verbal disease above noticed may be reserved for diagnosis by and by. It is not a disease from which Mr. Arthur Symons (for the quotation

was, of course, not from Mr. Symons) notably suffers. Mr. Symons represents the other tendency; he is a representative of what is always called "aesthetic criticism" or "impressionistic criticism." And it is this form of criticism which I propose to examine at once. Mr. Symons, the critical successor of Pater, and partly of Swinburne (I fancy that the phrase "sick or sorry" is the common property of all three), *is* the "impressionistic critic."[5] He, if anyone, would be said to expose a sensitive and cultivated mind – cultivated, that is, by the accumulation of a considerable variety of impressions from all the arts and several languages – before an "object"; and his criticism, if anyone's, would be said to exhibit to us, like the plate, the faithful record of the impressions, more numerous or more refined than our own, upon a mind more sensitive than our own. A record, we observe, which is also an interpretation, a translation; for it must itself impose impressions upon us, and these impressions are as much created as transmitted by the criticism. I do not say at once that this is Mr. Symons; but it is the "impressionistic" critic, and the impressionistic critic is supposed to be Mr. Symons.

At hand is a volume which we may test. Ten of these thirteen essays deal with single plays of Shakespeare, and it is therefore fair to take one of these ten as a specimen of the book:

> *Antony and Cleopatra* is the most wonderful, I think, of all Shakespeare's plays . . . [1]

and Mr. Symons reflects that Cleopatra is the most wonderful of all women:

> The queen who ends the dynasty of the Ptolemies has been the star of poets, a malign star shedding baleful light, from Horace and Propertius down to Victor Hugo; and it is not to poets only . . . [1]

What, we ask, is this for? as a page on Cleopatra, and on her possible origin in the dark lady of the Sonnets, unfolds itself. And we find, gradually, that this is not an essay on a work of art or a work of intellect; but that Mr. Symons is living through the play as one might live it through in the theatre; recounting, commenting:

> In her last days Cleopatra touches a certain elevation . . . she would die a thousand times, rather than live to be a mockery and a scorn in men's mouths . . . she is a woman to the last . . . so she dies . . . the play ends with a touch of grave pity. . . [18-20]

Presented in this rather unfair way, torn apart like the leaves of an artichoke, the impressions of Mr. Symons come to resemble a common type of popular literary lecture, in which the stories of plays or novels are retold, the motives of the characters set forth, and the work of art therefore made easier for the beginner. But this is not Mr. Symons' reason for writing. The reason why we find a similarity between his essay and this form of education is that *Antony and Cleopatra* is a play with which we are pretty well acquainted, and of which we have, therefore, our own impressions. We can please ourselves with our own impressions of the characters and their emotions; and we do not find the impressions of another person, however sensitive, very significant. But if we can recall the time when we were ignorant of the French symbolists, and met with *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*, we remember that book as an introduction to wholly new feelings, as a revelation. After we have read Verlaine and Laforgue and Rimbaud and return to Mr. Symons' book, we may find that our own impressions dissent from his. The book has not, perhaps, a permanent value for the one reader, but it has led to results of permanent importance for him.[6]

The question is not whether Mr. Symons' impressions are "true" or "false." So far as you can isolate the "impression," the pure feeling, it is, of course, neither true nor false. The point is that you never rest at the pure feeling; you react in one of two ways, or, as I believe Mr. Symons does, in a mixture of the two ways. The moment you try to put the impressions into words, you either begin to analyse and construct, to "ériger en lois," or you begin to create something else. It is significant that Swinburne, by whose poetry Mr. Symons may at one time have been influenced, is one man in his poetry and a different man in his criticism; to this extent and in this respect only, that he is satisfying a different impulse;[7†] he is criticizing, expounding, arranging. You may say that it is not the criticism of a critic, that it is emotional, not intellectual – though of this there are two opinions, but it is in the direction of analysis and construction, a beginning to "ériger en lois," and not in the direction of creation. So I infer that Swinburne found an adequate outlet for the creative impulse in his poetry; and none of it was forced back and out through his critical prose. The style of the latter is essentially a prose style; and Mr. Symons' prose is much more like Swinburne's poetry than it is like his prose. I imagine – though here one's thought is moving in almost complete darkness – that Mr. Symons is far

more disturbed, far more profoundly affected, by his reading than was Swinburne, who responded rather by a violent and immediate and comprehensive burst of admiration which may have left him internally unchanged. The disturbance in Mr. Symons is almost, but not quite, to the point of creating; the reading sometimes fecundates his emotions to produce something new which is not criticism, but is not the expulsion, the ejection, the birth of creativeness.

The type is not uncommon, although Mr. Symons is far superior to most of the type. Some writers are essentially of the type that reacts in excess of the stimulus, making something new out of the impressions, but suffer from a defect of vitality or an obscure obstruction which prevents nature from taking its course. Their sensibility alters the object, but never transforms it. Their reaction is that of the ordinary emotional person developed to an exceptional degree. For this ordinary emotional person, experiencing a work of art, has a mixed critical and creative reaction. It is made up of comment and opinion, and also new emotions which are vaguely applied to his own life. The sentimental person, in whom a work of art arouses all sorts of emotions which have nothing to do with that work of art whatever, but are accidents of personal association, is an incomplete artist. For in an artist these suggestions made by a work of art, which are purely personal, become fused with a multitude of other suggestions from multitudinous experience, and result in the production of a new object which is no longer purely personal, because it is a work of art itself.

It would be rash to speculate, and is perhaps impossible to determine, what is unfulfilled in Mr. Symons' charming verse that overflows into his critical prose. Certainly we may say that in Swinburne's verse the circuit of impression and expression is complete; and Swinburne was therefore able, in his criticism, to be more a critic than Mr. Symons. This gives us an intimation why the artist is – each within his own limitations – oftenest to be depended upon as a critic; his criticism will be criticism, and not the satisfaction of a suppressed creative wish – which, in most other persons, is apt to interfere fatally.

Before considering what the proper critical reaction of artistic sensibility is, how far criticism is "feeling" and how far "thought," and what sort of "thought" is permitted, it may be instructive to prod a little into that other temperament, so different from Mr. Symons', which issues in generalities such as that quoted near the beginning of this article.

II

> "L'écrivain de style abstrait est presque toujours un sentimental, du moins un sensitif. L'écrivain artiste n'est presque jamais un sentimental, et très rarement un sensitif." – *Le Problème du Style*.[8]

The statement already quoted, that "poetry is the most highly organized form of intellectual activity," may be taken as a specimen of the abstract style in criticism. The confused distinction which exists in most heads between "abstract" and "concrete" is due not so much to a manifest fact of the existence of two types of mind, an abstract and a concrete, as to the existence of another type of mind, the verbal, or philosophic. I, of course, do not imply any general condemnation of philosophy; I am, for the moment, using the word "philosophic" to cover the unscientific ingredients of philosophy; to cover, in fact, the greater part of the philosophic output of the last hundred years. There are two ways in which a word may be "abstract." It may have (the word "activity," for example) a meaning which cannot be grasped by appeal to any of the senses; its apprehension may require a deliberate suppression of analogies of visual or muscular experience, which is none the less an effort of imagination. "Activity" will mean for the trained scientist, if he employ the term, either nothing at all or something still more exact than anything it suggests to us. If we are allowed to accept certain remarks of Pascal and Mr. Bertrand Russell about mathematics, we believe that the mathematician deals with objects – if he will permit us to call them objects – which directly affect his sensibility.[9] And during a good part of history the philosopher endeavoured to deal with objects which he believed to be of the same exactness as the mathematician's. Finally Hegel arrived, and if not perhaps the first, he was certainly the most prodigious exponent of emotional systematization, dealing with his emotions as if they were definite objects which had aroused those emotions. His followers have as a rule taken for granted that words have definite meanings, overlooking the tendency of words to become indefinite emotions. (No one who had not witnessed the event could imagine the conviction in the tone of professor Eucken as he pounded the table and exclaimed *Was ist Geist? Geist ist . . .*)[10] If verbalism were confined to professional philosophers, no harm would be done. But their corruption has extended very far. Compare a mediaeval theologian or mystic, compare a seventeenth-century preacher, with any "liberal" sermon since Schleiermacher, and you will observe that words have changed their

meanings.[11] What they have lost is definite, and what they have gained is indefinite.

The vast accumulations of knowledge – or at least of information – deposited by the nineteenth century have been responsible for an equally vast ignorance. When there is so much to be known, when there are so many fields of knowledge in which the same words are used with different meanings, when every one knows a little about a great many things, it becomes increasingly difficult for anyone to know whether he knows what he is talking about or not. And when we do not know, or when we do not know enough, we tend always to substitute emotions for thoughts. The sentence so frequently quoted in this essay will serve for an example of this process as well as any, and may be profitably contrasted with the opening phrases of the *Posterior Analytics*.[12] Not only all knowledge, but all feeling, is in perception. The inventor of poetry as the most highly organized form of intellectual activity was not engaged in perceiving when he composed this definition; he had nothing to be aware of except his own emotion about "poetry." He was, in fact, absorbed in a very different "activity" not only from that of Mr. Symons, but from that of Aristotle.

Aristotle is a person who has suffered from the adherence of persons who must be regarded less as his disciples than as his sectaries. One must be firmly distrustful of accepting Aristotle in a canonical spirit; this is to lose the whole living force of him. He was primarily a man of not only remarkable but universal intelligence; and universal intelligence means that he could apply his intelligence to anything. The ordinary intelligence is good only for certain classes of objects; a brilliant man of science, if he is interested in poetry at all, may conceive grotesque judgments: like one poet because he reminds him of himself, or another because he expresses emotions which he admires; he may use art, in fact, as the outlet for the egotism which is suppressed in his own speciality. But Aristotle had none of these impure desires to satisfy; in whatever sphere of interest, he looked solely and steadfastly at the object; in his short and broken treatise he provides an eternal example – not of laws, or even of method, for there is no method except to be very intelligent, but of intelligence itself swiftly operating the analysis of sensation to the point of principle and definition.

It is far less Aristotle than Horace who has been the model for criticism up to the nineteenth century. A precept, such as Horace or Boileau gives us, is merely an unfinished analysis.[13] It appears as a law, a rule, because it does not appear in its most general form; it is empirical. When we

understand necessity, as Spinoza knew, we are free because we assent.[14] The dogmatic critic, who lays down a rule, who affirms a value, has left his labour incomplete. Such statements may often be justifiable as a saving of time; but in matters of great importance the critic must not coerce, and he must not make judgments of worse and better. He must simply elucidate: the reader will form the correct judgment for himself.

And again, the purely "technical" critic – the critic, that is, who writes to expound some novelty or impart some lesson to practitioners of an art – can be called a critic only in a narrow sense. He may be analysing perceptions and the means for arousing perceptions, but his aim is limited and is not the disinterested exercise of intelligence. The narrowness of the aim makes easier the detection of the merit or feebleness of the work; even of these writers there are very few – so that their "criticism" is of great importance within its limits. So much suffices for Campion. Dryden is far more disinterested; he displays much free intelligence; and yet even Dryden – or any *literary* critic of the seventeenth century – is not quite a free mind, compared, for instance, with such a mind as Rochefoucauld's. There is always a tendency to legislate rather than to inquire, to revise accepted laws, even to overturn, but to reconstruct out of the same material. And the free intelligence is that which is wholly devoted to inquiry.

Coleridge, again, whose natural abilities, and some of whose performances, are probably more remarkable than those of any other modern critic, cannot be estimated as an intelligence completely free. The nature of the restraint in his case is quite different from that which limited the seventeenth-century critics, and is much more personal. Coleridge's metaphysical interest was quite genuine, and was, like most metaphysical interest, an affair of his emotions. But a literary critic should have no emotions except those immediately provoked by a work of art – and these (as I have already hinted) are, when valid, perhaps not to be called emotions at all. Coleridge is apt to take leave of the data of criticism, and arouse the suspicion that he has been diverted into a metaphysical hare-and-hounds. His end does not always appear to be the return to the work of art with improved perception and intensified, because more conscious, enjoyment; his centre of interest changes, his feelings are impure. In the derogatory sense he is more "philosophic" than Aristotle. For everything that Aristotle says illuminates the literature which is the occasion for saying it; but Coleridge only now and then. It is one more instance of the pernicious effect of emotion.

Aristotle had what is called the scientific mind – a mind which, as it is rarely found among scientists except in fragments, might better be called the intelligent mind. For there is no other intelligence than this, and so far as artists and men of letters are intelligent (we may doubt whether the level of intelligence among men of letters is as high as among men of science) their intelligence is of this kind. Sainte-Beuve was a physiologist by training; but it is probable that his mind, like that of the ordinary scientific specialist, was limited in its interest, and that this was not, primarily, an interest in art. If he was a critic, there is no doubt that he was a very good one; but we may conclude that he earned some other name.[15] Of all modern critics, perhaps Remy de Gourmont had most of the general intelligence of Aristotle. An amateur, though an excessively able amateur, in physiology, he combined to a remarkable degree sensitiveness, erudition, sense of fact and sense of history, and generalizing power.[16]

We assume the gift of a superior sensibility. And for sensibility wide and profound reading does not mean merely a more extended pasture. There is not merely an increase of understanding, leaving the original acute impression unchanged. The new impressions modify the impressions received from the objects already known. An impression needs to be constantly refreshed by new impressions in order that it may persist at all; it needs to take its place in a system of impressions. And this system tends to become articulate in a generalized statement of literary beauty.

There are, for instance, many scattered lines and tercets in the *Divine Comedy* which are capable of transporting even a quite uninitiated reader, just sufficiently acquainted with the roots of the language to decipher the meaning, to an impression of overpowering beauty. This impression may be so deep that no subsequent study and understanding will intensify it. But at this point the impression is emotional; the reader in the ignorance which we postulate is unable to distinguish the poetry from an emotional state aroused in himself by the poetry, a state which may be merely an indulgence of his own emotions. The poetry may be an accidental stimulus. The end of the enjoyment of poetry is a pure contemplation from which all the accidents of personal emotion are removed; thus we aim to see the object as it really is and find a meaning for the words of Arnold.[17] And without a labour which is largely a labour of the intelligence, we are unable to attain that stage of vision *amor intellectualis Dei.*[18]

Such considerations, cast in this general form, may appear commonplaces. But I believe that it is always opportune to call attention to the torpid

superstition that appreciation is one thing, and "intellectual" criticism something else. Appreciation in popular psychology is one faculty, and criticism another, an arid cleverness building theoretical scaffolds upon one's own perceptions or those of others. On the contrary, the true generalization is not something superposed upon an accumulation of perceptions; the perceptions do not, in a really appreciative mind, accumulate as a mass, but form themselves as a structure;[19] and criticism is the statement in language of this structure; it is a development of sensibility. The bad criticism, on the other hand, is that which is nothing but an expression of emotion. And emotional people – such as stockbrokers, politicians, men of science – and a few people who pride themselves on being unemotional – detest or applaud great writers such as Spinoza or Stendhal because of their "frigidity."

The writer of the present essay once committed himself to the statement that "The poetic critic is criticizing poetry in order to create poetry."[20] He is now inclined to believe that the "historical" and the "philosophical" critics had better be called historians and philosophers quite simply. As for the rest, there are merely various degrees of intelligence. It is fatuous to say that criticism is for the sake of "creation" or creation for the sake of criticism. It is also fatuous to assume that there are ages of criticism and ages of creativeness, as if by plunging ourselves into intellectual darkness we were in better hope of finding spiritual light. The two directions of sensibility are complementary; and as sensibility is rare, unpopular, and desirable, it is to be expected that the critic and the creative artist should frequently be the same person.

NOTES

1. As revised and printed in *SW*; originally published in two parts as "The Perfect Critic" and "The Perfect Critic, II" in *The Athenaeum*, 4706 (9 July 1920), 40-41, and 4708 (23 July 1920) 102-04. The first installment was, in part, a review of *Studies in the Elizabethan Drama* by Arthur Symons (London: Heinemann, 1920). Pp. 261.

2. *Trans*: "To erect his personal impressions into laws is the great effort of a man if he is sincere." Remy de Gourmont, *Lettres à l'Amazone* [*Letters to the Amazon*] (1914), trans. Richard Aldington, in *Remy de Gourmont*, 1:254.

3†. In *Ath*: "Coleridge was certainly the greatest"

4. Edmund Gosse, "World of Books: The New Poetry," *Sunday Times*, 30 May 1920, 7.

5. Matthew Arnold uses the phrase "sick or sorry" in "Pagan and Medieval Religious Sentiment" (1864) to describe the state of hardship to which medieval Christianity ministered more effectively than the hedonistic religions of Greek antiquity: "the old, ideal, limited, pagan world never, I have said, *was* sick or sorry, never at least shows itself to us sick or sorry." *Essays*

Literary and Critical, 142. The phrase also appears in the opening scene of *Empedocles on Etna* (1852), when Callicles exclaims, "Apollo! / What mortal could be sick or sorry here?"

Symons knew Pater personally, dedicated his first book of verse to him, and had recently written an introduction to a new edition of *The Renaissance* (1919); he also knew Swinburne and wrote about both him and Pater in *Figures of Several Centuries* (1916).

6. TSE discovered the American edition (1908) of Symons's book (1899) at Harvard in Dec 1908. He wrote to Symons on 14 Nov 1923: "I have a peculiar debt of gratitude to your *Symbolist Movement* for that was my introduction, for [which] I have never ceased to be grateful to you, to a poetry which has been one of the strongest influences on my life" (*L2* 275).

7†. In *Ath*: "in his criticism. He is a different man in this respect, that he is satisfying a different impulse;"

8. *Trans*: "The writer with an abstract style is almost always a sentimentalist, at least a sensitive. The artist-writer is hardly ever a sentimental and very rarely a sensitive." Remy de Gourmont, *Le Problème du style*, trans. Richard Aldington in *Remy de Gourmont*, 2:426.

9. Pascal suggests in the *Pensées* (#110) that numbers affect the mind in the same way that space and time do, and that knowledge of such principles is "aussi ferme qu'aucune de celles que nos raisonnements nous donnent" [are as solid as any of those given through reason]. In the preface to *The Principles of Mathematics* (Cambridge UP, 1903), which TSE read in spring 1914 while attending Russell's graduate seminar, Russell claims that the mathematician should aim "to make others see clearly, the entities concerned, in order that the mind may have that kind of acquaintance with them which it has with redness or the taste of a pineapple" (v).

10. *Trans*: "What is soul? Soul is . . ."; TSE attended a course on the philosophy of religion in 1912 with Rudolf Eucken, who was visiting Harvard in 1912-13. The remarks that TSE recalls from class do not appear in Eucken's published writings, but in *Der Wahrheitsgehalt der Religion* (1901) (*The Truth of Religion*, trans. W. T. Jones,1912), Eucken defends religion and the existence of the human soul against the materialism and positivism of his contemporaries, for whom he claims "the 'soul' has become an empty word" (28). TSE quotes from Eucken repeatedly in his graduate papers and dissertation (1.63, 1.190, 1.377).

11. A spokesman of liberal Protestant theology, Friedrich Schleiermacher argued in *On Religion* (1799) that all religion is founded on feeling – a "feeling of absolute dependence," as TSE paraphrased in an early review – rather than reason or conduct (1.434).

12. In the edition of Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics* that TSE owned and studied at Oxford, Edward Poste translates the opening line as follows: "All teaching and learning by way of inference proceed from pre-existent knowledge." *The Logic of Science: A Translation of the Posterior Analytics of Aristotle* (Oxford, 1870), 39.

13. TSE refers to the precepts in *Ars poetica* by Horace (65-68 BC) and *L'Art poétique* (1674) by Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux, both didactic treatises about literary craft.

14. In his *Principia philosophiae cartesianae* (1663) [*The Principles of Descartes' Philosophy*] Spinoza writes, "Although it is true that when we clearly and distinctly conceive something we cannot withhold assent, this necessity of assent does not depend upon some defect in the will, but upon its freedom and perfection. For to assent to the truth is a mark of perfection in us." Trans. H. H. Britan (Chicago: Open Court, 1905), 49.

15. Sainte-Beuve attended medical school in Paris from 1823 to 1827, during which time he also began writing for the *Globe*.

16. Gourmont expounded his theories of physiology in *Physique de l'amour: Essai sur l'instinct sexuel* [*The Natural Philosophy of Love: An Essay on the Sexual Instinct*] (1903). Ezra Pound had recently written that it "should be used as a text book of biology." "De Gourmont: A Distinction," *The Little Review* 5 (Feb-Mar 1919), 5.

17. Arnold discusses the need for criticism "to see the object as in itself it really is" in the first paragraph of "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" (1865). In his copy of Arnold's *Essays Literary and Critical*, TSE marked the subsequent claim that "the mass of mankind will never have any ardent zeal for seeing things as they are; very inadequate ideas will always satisfy them" (16).

18. *Trans*: intellectual love of God. In part five of the *Ethics*, Spinoza suggests that this is the highest form of knowledge and the soul's greatest good insofar as it subdues the passions and allows one to see the essences of things under the aspect of eternity.

19. TSE earlier referred explicitly to Johann Herbart's concept of the accumulated mass of perceptions (or *Apperzeptionsmass*) that acts a background for individual perceptions and experiences; see "The Education of Taste" (64).

20. "A Brief Treatise on the Criticism of Poetry" (204).

The Perfect Critic

To the Editor of *The Athenaeum*

The Athenaeum, 4710 (6 Aug 1920) 190

Sir, – Mr. Hannay doubts whether I have justified my distinction between the critic and the philosopher, and suspects that I am making a distinction between a kind of philosophical criticism of which I approve and another kind of which I disapprove.[1] If I *have* made this distinction between kinds to Mr. Hannay's satisfaction, and not merely shown that I like some critical writings and not others, then I ought to be content. The frontier cannot be clearly defined; at all events I trust that Mr. Hannay would agree that Hegel's *Philosophy of Art* adds very little to our enjoyment or understanding of art, though it fills a gap in Hegel's philosophy.[2] I have in mind a rather celebrated passage towards the end of Taine's *History of English Literature* (I have not the book by me) in which he compares Tennyson and Musset.[3] Taine is a person for whom I have considerable respect, but this passage does not seem to me to be good as criticism; the comparative vision of French and English life does not seem to me to issue quite ingenuously out of an appreciation of the two poets; I should say that Taine was here philosophizing rather than "developing his sensibility into a generalized structure."

I do not understand Mr. Hannay's request that I should quote an instance of "this generalization which is neither itself poetry nor discursive reasoning." I find in Chambers (the only dictionary within reach) that "discursive" means "desultory," "rational," or "proceeding regularly from premises to conclusion."[4] Surely I have not pretended that criticism should avoid "discursive reasoning" in this last sense?

As to the question whether my article on "The Perfect Critic" was itself philosophy or perfect criticism, I need only refer Mr. Hannay to the *Principia Mathematica* Chap. II., especially page 65 (The Theory of Types and the Cretan Liar: "Hence the statement of Epimenides does not fall within its own scope, and therefore no contradiction emerges").[5]

I am, Sir,
Your obliged obedient servant,
T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. A. H. Hannay (1889-1955), art critic for the *London Mercury* since Feb 1920, wrote to the editor of the Athenaeum on 30 July: "Mr. T. S. Eliot's article 'The Perfect Critic' contains many interesting points, and I think that he is doing valuable work in investigating closely the interconnection between criticism and the work criticized; but his final conclusion is still to me rather obscure, and I doubt whether he has really justified his distinction between the critic who develops his sensibility into a generalized structure and the philosophic critic. . . . I suspect that Mr. Eliot is really making a distinction between a kind of philosophical criticism of which he approves and another kind of which he disapproves" (156).

2. A review of the new translation of Hegel's *Vorlesungen über die Aesthetik* (1835), *The Philosophy of Fine Art*, trans. F. P. B. Osmaston, 4 vols (London: Bell, 1916-20), had appeared in the *Athenaeum* in Apr 1920.

3. Taine concludes book 5 of his *Histoire de la littérature anglaise* [*History of English Literature*] with a comparison of Tennyson's England and Alfred de Musset's France, arguing in favor of understanding writers in their social context: "we shall better understand the flowers if we see them in the garden." Trans. H. Van Laun (London: Chatto & Windus, 1897), 454.

4. *Chambers's Twentieth Century Dictionary of the English Language*, ed. Thomas Davidson (London: W. & R. Chambers, 1901).

5. Chapter 2 of the introduction to vol 1 of the Whitehead-Russell *Principia Mathematica* demonstrates how the theory of hierarchically organized "types" helps to solve contradictions in logic – like the paradox involving the sixth-century Cretan philosopher Epimenides and his claim that all Cretans are liars – by excluding certain sentences from their own scope of reference. TSE quotes from the Cambridge UP edition (1910).

A French Romantic

To the Editor of the *TLS*

Times Literary Supplement, 980 (28 Oct 1920) 703

Sir, – I hope that I am not too late in raising one or two questions suggested by the important article in your issue of September 30 entitled "A French Romantic."[1] I have been delayed by personal preoccupations; I am excused for writing now, if I am excused at all, by the importance of the subject, the interest of the article, and the fact that no other correspondent has anticipated me.

I willingly concede the point, contested by Mr. Cyril Falls, that M. Maurras is a "romantic."[2] M. Maurras has been handled very competently by M. Julien Benda in an appendix to *Belphegor*.[3] So much for M. Maurras. It is in attempting to apprehend your critic's definitions of the terms "romanticism" and "classicism" that my intellect is confused and my serenity disturbed. We are told that Lamartine "floundered in romanticism" partly because "the sense of the mystery of things remained with him."[4] Later we learn that "Romanticism is an excess of emotion"; but we are not informed what balance can be struck between excess of emotion (which is surely a fault) and a sense of the mystery of things (which cannot be altogether a bad sense to have). The writer treats Romanticism on the whole with disapproval until he suddenly declares that the period of classical production in France was also "a great romantic period." This period is not the seventeenth century, which is dismissed as a period of "formalism": it is a period which is represented by the Cathedrals and by Jeanne d'Arc (but not, apparently, by Agnès Sorel).[5] I should be interested to know how the "cathedrals" are more classical, or more romantic either, than Vézelay, St. Benoît-sur-Loire, or Périgueux; but that is not the point: the point is, what is meant by applying *both* terms to their elucidation?[6]

I suggest that the difficulties which veil most critics' theories of Romanticism (and I include such writers as Pierre Lasserre and Irving Babbitt) are largely due to two errors.[7] One is that the critic applies the same term "romantic" to epochs and to individual artists, not perceiving that it assumes a difference of meaning; and the other is that he assumes

that the terms "romantic" and "classic" are mutually exclusive and even antithetical, without actually enforcing this exclusiveness in the examination of particular works of art.

Another difficulty is that these writers do not always appear to distinguish between *definitions* and *propositions*. Again, your critic introduces unexpected terms which are not defined. I cite "intellectual and emotional integrity," "spiritual purpose," and "larger integration." The alternatives are to elaborate a rigidly deductive system, or to employ the terms "romantic" and "classic" merely as convenient historical tags, never stretching their meaning beyond the acceptance of the intelligent reader. And it would perhaps be beneficial if we employed both terms as little as possible, if we even forgot these terms altogether, and looked steadily for the intelligence and sensibility which each work of art contains.

I am, Sir,
your obliged obedient servant,

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Basil de Sélincourt's "A French Romantic," a review of Albert Thibaudet's *Les Idées de Charles Maurras* [The Ideas of Charles Maurras], *TLS* (30 Sept 1920), 625-26.

2. In the *TLS* of 7 Oct, British journalist Cyril Falls (1888-1971) wrote to contest Sélincourt's criticism of Maurras in the review, arguing instead that Maurras is a "convinced classicist" who "has spent his life in combating romantic ethics and romantic aesthetics"(652).

3. In "Note J, The Romanticism of Reason," an appendix to *Belphégor: Essai sur l'esthétique de la présente société française* [*Belphégor: Essay on the Aesthetic of Contemporary French Society*] (1918), French essayist and philosopher Julien Benda (1867-1956) suggests that Maurras's enthusiastic and contemptuous manner makes him a romantic despite his defense of classicism.

4. Alphonse de Lamartine (1790-1869), author of *Méditations poétiques* [*Poetic Meditations*] (1820).

5. Agnès Sorel (1422-50) was the official mistress of Charles VII, King of France, whose coronation in 1422 was influenced by the victorious battles fought by Jeanne d'Arc (ca. 1412-31) to free France from foreign rule. TSE likely saw Sorel's ninth-century castle when he visited Loches on his two-week tour of Central France with Wyndham Lewis in Aug 1920.

6. TSE may also have visited the ninth-century abbey at Vézelay and the seventh-century Benedictine abbey at Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire while in France with Lewis; he had seen the medieval Basilica of Saint Front in Périgueux during a walking tour of the Dordogne with Pound in Aug 1919.

7. Pierre Lasserre (1867-1930) was the author of the first full-length study of Maurras and a onetime member of the French monarchist movement and daily newspaper, *L'Action française*.

TSE assigned Lasserre's antiromantic tract *Le Romantisme français: Essai sur la révolution dans les sentiments et dans les idées au XIXe siècle* [*French Romanticism: An Essay on the Revolution in Feeling and in Ideas in the 19th Century*] (1907) in his 1916 Extension lectures (1.475). Irving Babbitt (1865-1933), who called Lasserre's work a "notable expression" of the new classicism, critiqued the romantic elements of modern thought in *Masters of Modern French Criticism* (1912) and *Rousseau and Romanticism* (1919).

The Possibility of a Poetic Drama[1]

The questions – why there is no poetic drama to-day, how the stage has lost all hold on literary art, why so many poetic plays are written which can only be read, and read, if at all, without pleasure – have become insipid, almost academic. The usual conclusion is either that "conditions" are too much for us, or that we really prefer other types of literature, or simply that we are uninspired. As for the last alternative, it is not to be entertained; as for the second, what type do we prefer? ; and as for the first, no one has ever shown me "conditions," except of the most superficial. The reasons for raising the question again are first that the majority, perhaps, certainly a large number, of poets hanker for the stage; and second, that a not negligible public appears to want verse plays. Surely there is some legitimate craving, not restricted to a few persons, which only the verse play can satisfy. And surely the critical attitude is to attempt to analyse the conditions and the other data. If there comes to light some conclusive obstacle, the investigation should at least help us to turn our thoughts to more profitable pursuits; and if there is not, we may hope to arrive eventually at some statement of conditions which might be altered. Possibly we shall find that our incapacity has a deeper source: the arts have at times flourished when there was no drama; possibly we are incompetent altogether; in that case the stage will be, not the seat, but at all events a symptom, of the malady.

From the point of view of literature, the drama is only one among several poetic forms. The epic, the ballad, the *chanson de geste*, the forms of Provence and of Tuscany, all found their perfection by serving particular societies. The forms of Ovid, Catullus, Propertius, served a society different, and in some respects more civilized, than any of these; and in the society of Ovid the drama as a form of art was comparatively insignificant.[2] Nevertheless, the drama is perhaps the most permanent, is capable of greater variation and of expressing more varied types of society, than any other. It varied considerably in England alone; but when one day it was discovered lifeless, subsequent forms which had enjoyed a transitory life were dead too. I am not prepared to undertake the historical survey; but I should say that the poetic drama's autopsy was performed as much by Charles Lamb as by anyone else. For a form is not wholly dead until it is

known to be; and Lamb, by exhuming the remains of dramatic life at its fullest, brought a consciousness of the immense gap between present and past.[3] It was impossible to believe, after that, in a dramatic "tradition." The relation of Byron's *English Bards* and the poems of Crabbe to the work of Pope was a continuous tradition; but the relation of *The Cenci* to the great English drama is almost that of a reconstruction to an original.[4] By losing tradition, we lose our hold on the present; but so far as there was any dramatic tradition in Shelley's day there was nothing worth the keeping. There is all the difference between preservation and restoration.

The Elizabethan Age in England was able to absorb a great quantity of new thoughts and new images, almost dispensing with tradition, because it had this great form of its own which imposed itself on everything that came to it. Consequently, the blank verse of their plays accomplished a subtlety and consciousness, even an intellectual power, that no blank verse since has developed or even repeated; elsewhere this age is crude, pedantic, or loutish in comparison with its contemporary France or Italy. The nineteenth century had a good many fresh impressions; but it had no form in which to confine them. Two men, Wordsworth and Browning, hammered out forms for themselves – personal forms, *The Excursion*, *Sordello*, *The Ring and the Book*, *Dramatic Monologues*; but no man can invent a form, create a taste for it, and perfect it too.[5†] Tennyson, who might unquestionably have been a consummate master of minor forms, took to turning out large patterns on a machine. As for Keats and Shelley, they were too young to be judged, and they were trying one form after another.

These poets were certainly obliged to consume vast energy in this pursuit of form, which could never lead to a wholly satisfying result. There has only been one Dante; and, after all, Dante had the benefit of years of practice in forms employed and altered by numbers of contemporaries and predecessors; he did not waste the years of youth in metric invention; and when he came to the *Commedia* he knew how to pillage right and left. To have, given into one's hands, a crude form, capable of indefinite refinement, and to be the person to see the possibilities – Shakespeare was very fortunate. And it is perhaps the craving for some such *donnée* which draws us on toward the present mirage of poetic drama.

But it is now very questionable whether there are more than two or three in the present generation who are *capable*, the least little bit, of benefiting[6†] by such advantages were they given. At most two or three actually devote themselves to this pursuit of form for which they have little or no

public recognition. To create a form is not merely to invent a shape, a rhyme or rhythm. It is also the realization of the whole appropriate content of this rhyme or rhythm. The sonnet of Shakespeare is not merely such and such a pattern, but a precise way of thinking and feeling. The *framework* which was provided for the Elizabethan dramatist was not merely blank verse and the five-act play and the Elizabethan playhouse; it was not merely the plot – for the poets incorporated, remodelled, adapted or invented, as occasion suggested. It was also the half-formed ὕλη, the "temper of the age" (an unsatisfactory phrase), a preparedness, a habit on the part of the public, to respond to particular stimuli.[7†] There is a book to be written on the commonplaces of any great dramatic period, the handling of Fate or Death, the recurrence of mood, tone, situation. We should see then just how *little* each poet had to do; only so much as would make a play his, only what was really essential to make it different from anyone else's. When there is this economy of effort it is possible to have several, even many, good poets at once. The great ages did not perhaps *produce* much more talent than ours; but less talent was wasted.

Now in a formless age there is very little hope for the minor poet to do anything worth doing; and when I say minor I mean very good poets indeed: such as filled the Greek anthology and the Elizabethan songbooks; even a Herrick; but not merely second-rate poets, for Denham and Waller have quite another importance, occupying points in the development of a major form.[8] When everything is set out for the minor poet to do, he may quite frequently come upon some *trouvaille*, even in the drama: Peele and Brome are examples. Under the present conditions, the minor poet has too much to do. And this leads to another reason for the incompetence of our time in poetic drama.

Permanent literature is always a presentation: either a presentation of thought, or a presentation of feeling by a statement of events in human action or objects in the external world. In earlier literature – to avoid the word "classic" – we find both kinds, and sometimes, as in some of the dialogues of Plato, exquisite combinations of both. Aristotle presents thought, stripped to the essential structure, and he is a great *writer*. The *Agamemnon* or *Macbeth* is equally a statement, but of events. They are as much works of the "intellect" as the writings of Aristotle. There are more recent works of art which have the same quality of intellect in common with those of Aeschylus and Shakespeare and Aristotle: *Éducation Sentimentale* is one of them. Compare it with such a book as *Vanity Fair* and you will see that the

labour of the intellect consisted largely in a purification, in keeping out a great deal that Thackeray allowed to remain in; in refraining from reflection, in putting into the statement enough to make reflection unnecessary. The case of Plato is still more illuminating. Take the *Theaetetus*. In a few opening words Plato gives a scene, a personality, a feeling, which colour the subsequent discourse but do not interfere with it: the particular setting, and the abstruse theory of knowledge afterwards developed, co-operate without confusion.[9] Could any contemporary author exhibit such control?

In the nineteenth century another mentality manifested itself. It is evident in a very able and brilliant poem, Goethe's *Faust*. Marlowe's Mephistopheles is a simpler creature than Goethe's. But at least Marlowe has, in a few words, concentrated him into a statement. He is there, and (incidentally) he renders Milton's Satan superfluous. Goethe's demon inevitably sends us back to Goethe. He embodies a philosophy. A creation of art should not do that: he should *replace* the philosophy. Goethe has not, that is to say, sacrificed or consecrated his thought to make the drama; the drama is still a means. And this type of mixed art has been repeated by men incomparably smaller than Goethe. We have had one other remarkable work of this type: *Peer Gynt*. And we have had the plays of M. Maeterlinck and M. Claudel.[10*]

In the works of Maeterlinck and Claudel on the one hand, and those of M. Bergson on the other, we have the mixture of the genres in which our age delights. Every work of imagination must have a philosophy; and every philosophy must be a work of art – how often have we heard that M. Bergson is an artist! It is a boast of his disciples.[11] It is what the word "art" means to them that is the disputable point. Certain works of philosophy can be called works of art: much of Aristotle and Plato, Spinoza, parts of Hume, Mr. Bradley's *Principles of Logic*, Mr. Russell's essay on "Denoting": clear and beautifully formed thought.[12] But this is not what the admirers of Bergson, Claudel, or Maeterlinck (the philosophy of the latter is a little out of date) mean. They mean precisely what is not clear, but what is an emotional stimulus. And as a mixture of thought and of vision provides more stimulus, by suggesting both, both clear thinking and clear statement of particular objects must disappear.

The undigested "idea" or philosophy, the idea-emotion, is to be found also in poetic dramas which are conscientious attempts to adapt a true structure, Athenian or Elizabethan, to contemporary feeling. It appears

sometimes as the attempt to supply the defect of structure by an internal structure.[13†] "But most important of all is the structure of the incidents. For Tragedy is an imitation, not of men, but of an action and of life, and life consists in action, and its end is a mode of action, not a quality."[14*]

We have on the one hand the "poetic" drama, imitation Greek, imitation Elizabethan, or modern-philosophical, on the other the comedy of "ideas," from Shaw to Galsworthy, down to the ordinary social comedy.[15] The most ramshackle Guitry farce has some paltry idea or comment upon life put into the mouth of one of the characters at the end.[16] It is said that the stage can be used for a variety of purposes, that in only one of them perhaps is it united with literary art. A mute theatre is a possibility (I do not mean the cinema); the ballet is an actuality (though under-nourished); opera is an institution; but where you have "imitations of life" on the stage, with speech, the only standard that we can allow is the standard of the work of art, aiming at the same intensity at which poetry and the other forms of art aim. From that point of view the Shavian drama is a hybrid as the Maeterlinckian drama is, and we need express no surprise at their belonging to the same epoch. Both philosophies are popularizations: the moment an idea has been transferred from its pure state in order that it may become comprehensible to the inferior intelligence it has lost contact with art. It can remain pure only by being stated simply in the form of general truth, or by being transmuted, as the attitude of Flaubert toward the small bourgeois is transformed in *Éducation Sentimentale*. It has there become so identified with the reality that you can no longer say what the idea is.

The essential is not, of course, that drama should be written in verse, or that we should be able to extenuate our appreciation of broad farce by occasionally attending a performance of a play of Euripides where Professor Murray's translation is sold at the door.[17] The essential is to get upon the stage this precise statement of life which is at the same time a point of view, a world – a world which the author's mind has subjected to a complete process of simplification. I do not find that any drama which "embodies a philosophy" of the author's (like *Faust*) or which illustrates any social theory (like Shaw's) can possibly fulfil the requirements – though a place might be left for Shaw if not for Goethe. And the world of Ibsen and the world of Tchehov[18†] are not enough simplified, universal.

Finally, we must take into account the instability of any art – the drama, music, dancing – which depends upon representation by performers. The

intervention of performers introduces a complication of economic conditions which is in itself likely to be injurious. A struggle, more or less unconscious, between the creator and the interpreter is almost inevitable. The interest of a performer is almost certain to be centred in himself: a very slight acquaintance with actors and musicians will testify. The performer is interested not in form but in opportunities for virtuosity or in the communication of his "personality"; the formlessness, the lack of intellectual clarity and distinction in modern music, the great physical stamina and physical training which it often requires, are perhaps signs of the triumph of the performer. The consummation of the triumph of the actor over the play is perhaps the productions of the Guitry.

The conflict is one which certainly cannot be terminated by the utter rout of the actor profession. For one thing, the stage appeals to too many demands besides the demand for art for that to be possible; and also we need, unfortunately, something more than refined automatons. Occasionally attempts have been made to "get around" the actor, to envelop him in masks, to set up a few "conventions" for him to stumble over, or even to develop little breeds of actors for some special Art drama. This meddling with nature seldom succeeds; nature usually overcomes these obstacles. Possibly the majority of attempts to confect a poetic drama have begun at the wrong end; they have aimed at the small public which wants "poetry." ("Novices," says Aristotle, "in the art attain to finish of diction and precision of portraiture before they can construct the plot.")[19] The Elizabethan drama was aimed at a public which wanted *entertainment* of a crude sort, but would *stand* a good deal of poetry; our problem should be to take a form of entertainment, and subject it to the process which would leave it a form of art. Perhaps the music-hall comedian is the best material. I am aware that this is a dangerous suggestion to make. For every person who is likely to consider it seriously there are a dozen toymakers who would leap to tickle aesthetic society into one more quiver and giggle of art debauch. Very few treat art seriously. There are those who treat it solemnly, and will continue to write poetic pastiches of Euripides and Shakespeare; and there are others who treat it as a joke.

NOTES

1. As printed in *SW*; originally published in *The Dial*, 69 (Nov 1920), 441-47. This was TSE's first contribution to the *Dial* under the new editorship of Scofield Thayer, a longtime friend from Milton Academy. TSE wrote to him on 30 June 1918, before Thayer took over the

editorship: "*I* should be delighted to write for your paper—or rather for any paper with which you are connected" (*L1* 269). He was unimpressed, however, by the first new issue in Jan 1920 and persuaded Thayer to appoint Ezra Pound as foreign editor. Shortly thereafter, in a letter of 24 Mar, TSE called the *Dial* one of "the only American periodicals I know of where one can ever look in the hope of finding anything" (*L1* 454). The present essay was finished by 3 July 1920 (*L1* 472). The *Dial* version used no italics or quotation marks to indicate titles.

2. Catullus, Propertius, and Ovid all composed mainly elegiac lyric poetry during the second or "golden" age of Roman literature, during which time the public taste for mime, pantomime, and rustic farce—alongside the strictures of the Christian church—contributed to the scarcity of verse drama intended for the stage.

3. For TSE's previous remarks on Charles Lamb's compilation of excerpts from Renaissance plays in *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets, Who Lived about the Time of Shakspeare* (1808); see "Swinburne as Critic" (115).

4. Both Byron, whose *English Bards, and Scotch Reviewers* appeared in 1809, and Crabbe explicitly modeled their verse after the heroic couplets and satire of Alexander Pope. Shelley's gothic play, *The Cenci* (1819), which TSE later included among the greatest of nineteenth-century verse drama, is modeled after Jacobean revenge plays and based on the actual tragedy of a sixteenth-century Italian family (*OPP* 27).

5†. In *Dial*: "confine them. Browning and perhaps Wordsworth hammered out forms for themselves"

Like Wordsworth's *The Excursion* (1814)—a dramatic verse narrative that alternates between four main speakers—Browning's *Sordello* (1840), *Dramatic Monologues* (1864), *The Ring and the Book* (1868-69) all combine dramatic and narrative forms.

6†. In *Dial*: "who are *capable*, the least bit capable, of benefiting"

7†. Misprinted in *Dial*: ὑγη, and in *SW*: ὑλή; here editorially corrected.

Trans: matter. TSE wrote a graduate essay on the complex uses of the term in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (1.220). He owned and annotated the *Metaphysica*, translated by J. A. Smith and W. D. Ross (Oxford: Clarendon, 1908).

8. TSE read from the Greek Anthology, a sixteen-volume compilation of lyrics by hundreds of poets writing between 7 BC and 10 AD, in J. W. Mackail's revised edition, *Select Epigrams from the Greek Anthology* (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1907). He discussed the popular Elizabethan anthologies of poetry and song in his 1918-19 Extension course, alongside Edward Arber's *Surrey and Wyatt Anthology* (1901) (1.756). Caroline poets Edmund Waller (1606-87) and John Denham (1615-69) were early practitioners of the end-stopped couplet that prevailed among later Augustan poets.

9. In the preface to Plato's *Theaetetus*, two men discuss the imminent death of the wounded soldier Theaetetus and then listen to an account of Socrates's earlier conversation with him, in which the philosopher refutes three theories about the perceptual origins of knowledge. TSE referred to the permanence of the young Thaetetus and Plato's stylistic restraint in "The Noh and the Image" and "The New Elizabethans and the Old" (1.567; 2.10).

10*. TSE's note: "I should except *The Dynasts*. This gigantic panorama is hardly to be called a success, but it is essentially an attempt to present a vision, and "sacrifices" the philosophy to the vision, as all great dramas do. Mr. Hardy has apprehended his matter as a poet and an artist." Printed in the *Dial* in parentheses in the body of the essay.

Despite its initial success, Henrik Ibsen's long dramatic poem *Peer Gynt* (1867) was criticized for its thinly disguised philosophical allegory. TSE likely encountered Maeterlinck in *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (2nd, rev. edn., New York: Dutton, 1908), where Symons describes his work as "drama founded on philosophical ideas" (156). Paul Claudel was frequently criticized for the overtly Catholic, evangelical messages of plays like *La Ville* [The City] (1893) and *L'Annonce faite à Marie* [The Tidings Brought to Mary] (1912).

11. For instance, Bergson's successor and supporter at the Collège de France, Édouard Le Roy, praises his artistic language and style in *Une philosophie nouvelle: Henri Bergson* [A New Philosophy: Henri Bergson] (1912). And Charles Sarolea writes in *The French Renascence* (which TSE reviewed [1.409]) that Bergson's "poetic style blossoms out again and again in unexpected metaphors" and that his view resembles "the aesthetic and intuitive judgment of the artist" (New York: James Pott & Co., 1916), 277, 280.

12. TSE had quoted from *The Principles of Logic* (1883) and called F. H. Bradley "a master of the English language" in "The Borderline of Prose" (1917) (1.540). He quotes from Bertrand Russell's "On Denoting" (*Mind*, 1905) in his dissertation (1.343).

13†. In *Dial*: "by an internal emotional structure"

14*. TSE's note (also printed in *Dial* in parenthesis in the body of the text): "*Poetics*, vi.9. Butcher's translation." TSE owned S. H. Butcher's edition (with Greek text and facing translation) of *The Poetics of Aristotle*, 3rd edn. (London: Macmillan, 1902), signed "T. S. Eliot/1919."

15. Playwright and novelist John Galsworthy (1867-1933), author of plays such as *The Silver Box* (1906), *Justice* (1910), and *The Fugitive* (1913).

16. TSE refers to the crowd-pleasing comedies written and performed by French actor and playwright Sacha Guitry (1885-1957) and his father Lucien-Germain Guitry (see illustration 13). The *Times* announced Guitry's arrival in London in May 1920 and reviewed all six plays of the first annual "Guitry season" (May-June 1920) at the Aldwych Theatre.

17. TSE recalls attending the Mar 1920 performance of *Medea* with his own copy of Gilbert Murray's "eighteenpenny translation" in "Euripides and Professor Murray" (195).

18†. In *Dial*: Chekhov

19. *The Poetics of Aristotle* VI.14, trans. Butcher, 27.

A Note on the American Critic[1]

This gallery of critics is not intended to be in any sense complete.[2] But having dealt with three English writers of what may be called critical prose, one's mind becomes conscious of the fact that they have something in common, and, trying to perceive more clearly what this community is, and suspecting that it is a national quality, one is impelled to meditate upon the strongest contrast possible. Hence these comments upon two American critics and one French critic, which would not take exactly this form without the contrast at which I have hinted.

Mr. Paul More is the author of a number of volumes which he perhaps hopes will break the record of mass established by the complete works of Sainte-Beuve. The comparison with Sainte-Beuve is by no means trivial, for Mr. More, and Professor Irving Babbitt also, are admirers of the voluminous Frenchman.[3] Not only are they admirers, but their admiration is perhaps a clue both to much of their merit and to some of their defects. In the first place, both of these writers have given much more attention to French criticism, to the study of French standards of writing and of thought, than any of the notable English critics since Arnold; they are therefore much nearer to the European current, although they exhibit faults which are definitely transatlantic and which definitely keep them out of it. The French influence is traceable in their devotion to ideas and their interest in problems of art and life as problems which exist and can be handled apart from their relations to the critic's private temperament. With Swinburne, the criticism of Elizabethan literature has the interest of a passion, it has the interest for us of any writing by an intellectual man who is genuinely moved by certain poetry.[4] Swinburne's intelligence is not defective, it is impure. There are few ideas in Swinburne's critical writings which stand forth luminous with an independent life of their own, so true that one forgets the author in the statement. Swinburne's words must always be referred back to Swinburne himself. And if literature is to Swinburne merely a passion, we are tempted to say that to George Wyndham it was a hobby, and to Mr. Whibley almost a charming showman's show (we are charmed by the urbanity of the showman). The two latter have gusto, but gusto is no equivalent for taste; it depends too much upon the appetite and the

digestion of the feeder. And with one or two other writers, whom I have not had occasion to discuss, literature is not so much a collection of valuable porcelain as an institution – accepted, that is to say, with the same gravity as the establishments of Church and State. That is, in other words, the essentially uncritical attitude. In all of these attitudes the English critic is the victim of his temperament. He may acquire great erudition, but erudition easily becomes a hobby; it is useless unless it enables us to see literature all round, to detach it from ourselves, to reach a state of pure contemplation.

Now Mr. More and Mr. Babbitt have endeavoured to establish a criticism which should be independent of temperament. This is in itself a considerable merit. But at this point Mr. More particularly has been led astray, oddly enough, by his guide Sainte-Beuve. Neither Mr. More nor Sainte-Beuve is primarily interested in art. Of the latter M. Benda has well observed that

> on sait – et c'est certainement un des grands éléments de son succès – combien d'études l'illustre critique consacre à des auteurs dont l'importance littéraire est quasi nulle (femmes, magistrats, courtisans, militaires), mais dont les écrits lui sont une occasion de pourtraiturer une âme; combien volontiers, pour les maîtres, il s'attache à leurs productions secondaires, notes, brouillons, lettres intimes, plutôt qu'à leurs grandes œuvres, souvent beaucoup moins expressives, en effet, de leur psychologie.[5]

Mr. More is not, like Sainte-Beuve, primarily interested in psychology or in human beings; Mr. More is primarily a moralist, which is a worthy and serious thing to be.[6] The trouble with Mr. More is that you cannot disperse a theory or point of view of morals over a vast number of essays on a great variety of important figures in literature, unless you can give some more particular interest as well. Sainte-Beuve has his particularized interest in human beings; another critic – say Remy de Gourmont – may have something to say always about the art of a writer which will make our enjoyment of that writer more conscious and more intelligent. But the pure moralist in letters – the moralist is useful to the creator as well as the reader of poetry – must be more concise, for we must have the pleasure of inspecting the beauty of his structure. And here M. Julien Benda has a great advantage over Mr. More; his thought may be less profound, but it has more formal beauty.

Mr. Irving Babbitt, who shares so many of the ideals and opinions of Mr. More that their names must be coupled, has expressed his thought more abstractly and with more form, and is free from a mystical impulse which occasionally gets out of Mr. More's hand. He appears, more clearly than Mr. More, and certainly more clearly than any critic of equal authority in America or England, to perceive Europe as a whole; he has the cosmopolitan mind and a tendency to seek the centre. His few books are important, and would be more important if he preached of discipline in a more disciplined style. Although he also is an admirer of Sainte-Beuve, he would probably subscribe to this admirable paragraph of Othenin d'Haussonville:[7]*

> Il y a une beauté littéraire, impersonnelle en quelque sorte, parfaitement distincte de l'auteur lui-même et de son organisation, beauté qui a sa raison d'être et ses lois, dont la critique est tenue de rendre compte. Et si la critique considère cette tâche comme au-dessous d'elle, si c'est affaire à la rhétorique et à ce que Sainte-Beuve appelle dédaigneusement les Quintilien, alors la rhétorique a du bon et les Quintilien ne sont pas à dédaigner.[8]

There may be several critics in England who would applaud this notion; there are very few who show any evidence of its apprehension in their writings. But Mr. More and Mr. Babbitt, whatever their actual tastes, and although they are not primarily occupied with art, are on the side of the artist. And the side of the artist is not the side which in England is often associated with critical writing. As Mr. More has pointed out in an interesting essay, there is a vital weakness in Arnold's definition of criticism as "the disinterested endeavour to know the best that is known and thought in the world, irrespectively of practice, politics, and everything of the kind."[9] The "disinterested endeavour to know" is only a prerequisite of the *critic*, and is not *criticism*, which may be the result of such an endeavour. Arnold states the work of the critic merely in terms of the personal ideal, an ideal for oneself – and an ideal for oneself is not disinterested. Here Arnold is the Briton rather than the European.

Mr. More indicates his own attitude in praising those whom he elevates to the position of masters of criticism:

> If they deal much with the criticism of literature, this is because in literature more manifestly than anywhere else life displays its infinitely varied

> motives and results; and their practice is always to render literature itself more consciously a criticism of life.[10]

"Criticism of life" is a facile phrase, and at most only represents one aspect of great literature, if it does not assign to the term "criticism" itself a generality which robs it of precision. Mr. More has, it seems to me, in this sentence just failed to put his finger on the right seriousness of great literary art; the seriousness which we find in Villon's *Testament* and which is conspicuously absent from *In Memoriam*; or the seriousness which controls "Amos Barton" and not *The Mill on the Floss*.[11]

It is a pity that Mr. More does not write a little oftener about the great literary artists, it is a pity that he takes the reputations of the world too solemnly. This is probably due in part to remoteness in space from the European centre. But it must be observed that English solemnity and American solemnity are very different. I do not propose to analyse the difference (it would be a valuable chapter in social history); the American solemnity, it is enough to say, is more primitive, more academic, more like that of the German professor. But it is not the fault of Mr. More or Mr. Babbitt that the culture of ideas has only been able to survive in America in the unfavourable atmosphere of the university.

NOTES

1. Printed for the first time in *SW* as the penultimate section of the five-part essay "Imperfect Critics," three parts of which had been previously published; for a list of the contents of "Imperfect Critics," see "Swinburne as Critic" (119, n. 1).

2. The "gallery of critics" whom TSE discussed in the preceding sections of "Imperfect Critics" included Swinburne, George Wyndham, and Charles Whibley.

3. More had recently begun lecturing on Greek philosophy at Princeton and had published the tenth volume of his *Shelburne Essays (With the Wits)* in Nov 1919. He met Irving Babbitt, who remained a lifelong friend, at Harvard in 1892 while both were studying Sanksrit. In his *Shelburne Essays, Third Series* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1905), More calls Sainte-Beuve "the *maître universel* of the century" and likely has in mind the multivolume sets such as *Causeries du lundi*, *Nouveaux lundis*, and *Port-Royal* when he writes that Sainte-Beuve's "long row of volumes are the scholar's Summa Theologiae" (55, 81).

4. See TSE's review of Swinburne's *Contemporaries of Shakespeare*, "Swinburne as Critic" (115).

5. *Belphégor*, 139. *Trans*: "It is assuredly one of the elements of his success that this illustrious critic devotes so many of his essays to authors whose literary importance is negligible (women, magistrates, courtiers, soldiers) but whose writings provide an opportunity of portraying a soul; that he delights to concentrate on the secondary products of the masters – notes, first drafts, intimate letters – rather than on their important works, which are admittedly less expressive of their psychology." *Belphegor*, trans. Sarah J. I. Lawson (London: Faber and Faber, 1929), 97-98.

6. TSE compares More to Sainte-Beuve and treats More as a moralist rather than as a psychologist in "An American Critic" (1.406).

7*. TSE's note: "*Revue des Deux Mondes*, fevr. 1875, quoted by Benda, *Belphégor*, p. 140." Benda quotes from "*Écrivains contemporains: Charles-Augustin Sainte-Beuve*" by Gabriel Paul Othenin de Cléron, comte d'Haussonville (1843-1924), originally in *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 7 (Feb 1875), 581.

8. *Belphégor*, 140n. *Trans*: "There is a literary beauty, to some extent impersonal and quite apart from the author himself and from his intention, a beauty which has its own *raison d'être* and its own laws, which criticism must take into account. And if criticism considers this task beneath it, and relegates it to the rhetoricians, and to the Quintilians, as Sainte-Beuve contemptuously terms them, then we would say that rhetoric has its elements of good, and the Quintilians are not to be despised." Trans. Lawson, 98.

9. More quotes from Arnold in "Criticism," *Shelburne Essays, Seventh Series* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1910), 230. The quotation conflates two passages from Arnold's "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time": first, that criticism "obeys an instinct prompting it to try to know the best that is known and thought in the world, irrespectively of practice, politics, and everything of the kind"; second, that it should consist of "a disinterested endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world." *Essays Literary and Critical* (London: Dent, 1914), 10-11, 23.

10. "Criticism," *Shelburne Essays, Seventh Series*, 218. More's list of critical masters includes Cicero, Erasmus, Boileau, Shaftesbury, Sainte-Beuve, and Matthew Arnold.

11. TSE preferred George Eliot's first story, "The Sad Fortune of the Rev. Amos Barton" (1858) to her later work, including *The Mill on the Floss* (1860). He praised the story's "genuine feeling" and "visual realism" in "The Hawthorne Aspect" (1.739). She "wrote one great story," he told Eleanor Hinkley on 1 Apr 1918, "and went steadily down hill afterwards" (*L1* 259).

The French Intelligence[1]

As the inspection of types of English irresistibly provoked a glance at two American critics, so the inspection of the latter leads our attention to the French. M. Julien Benda has the formal beauty which the American critics lack, and a close affinity to them in point of view.[2] He restricts himself, perhaps, to a narrower field of ideas, but within that field he manipulates the ideas with a very exceptional cogency and clarity. To notice his last book (*Belphégor: essai sur l'esthétique de la présente société française*) would be to quote from it.[3] M. Benda is not like Remy de Gourmont, the critical consciousness of a generation, he could not supply the conscious formulas of a sensibility in process of formation; he is rather the ideal scavenger of the rubbish of our time. Much of his analysis of the decadence of contemporary French society could be applied to London, although differences are observable from his diagnosis.

> Quant à la société en elle-même, on peut prévoir que ce soin qu'elle met à éprouver de l'émoi par l'art, devenant cause à son tour, y rendra la soif de ce plaisir de plus en plus intense, l'application à la satisfaire de plus en plus jalouse et plus perfectionnée. On entrevoit le jour où la bonne société française répudiera encore le peu qu'elle supporte aujourd'hui d'idées et d'organisation dans l'art, et ne se passionnera plus que pour des gestes de comédiens, pour des impressions de femmes ou d'enfants, pour des rugissements de lyriques, pour des extases de fanatiques . . .[4]

Almost the only person who has ever figured in England and attempted a task at all similar to that of M. Benda is Matthew Arnold. Matthew Arnold was intelligent, and by so much difference as the presence of one intelligent man makes, our age is inferior to that of Arnold. But what an advantage a man like M. Benda has over Arnold. It is not simply that he has a critical tradition behind him, and that Arnold is using a language which constantly tempts the user away from dispassionate exposition into sarcasm and diatribe, a language less fitted for criticism than the English of the eighteenth century. It is that the follies and stupidities of the French, no matter how base, express themselves in the form of ideas – Bergsonism itself is an intellectual construction, and the mondaines who attended lectures at the

College de France were in a sense using their minds.[5] A man of ideas needs ideas, or pseudo-ideas, to fight against. And Arnold lacked the active resistance which is necessary to keep a mind at its sharpest.

A society in which a mind like M. Benda's can exercise itself, and in which there are persons like M. Benda, is one which facilitates the task of the creative artist. M. Benda cannot be attached, like Gourmont, to any creative group. He does not wholly partake in that "conscious creation of the field of the present out of the past" which Mr. More considers to be part of the work of the critic.[6] But in analysing the maladies of the second-rate or corrupt literature of the time he makes the labour of the creative artist lighter. The Charles Louis Philippes of English literature are never done with, because there is no one to kill their reputations; we still hear that George Meredith is a master of prose, or even a profound philosopher.[7] The creative artist in England finds himself compelled, or at least tempted, to spend much of his time and energy in criticism that he might reserve for the perfecting of his proper work: simply because there is no one else to do it.

NOTES

1. Printed for the first time in *SW* as the final section of the five-part essay "Imperfect Critics," three parts of which had been previously published; for a list of the contents of "Imperfect Critics," see "Swinburne as Critic" (119, n. 1).

2. TSE was introduced to the work of Julien Benda by Ezra Pound, who sent him a copy of *Belphégor* in July 1920 and arranged for an English translation to appear serially in the *Dial* later that year. Benda himself sent TSE a copy of his *Le Bergsonisme* (1917), signed and dated 9 Jan 1921, for possible review. And when TSE published Benda's "A Preface" in the *Criterion* (Apr 1923), he appended an endnote calling *Belphégor* "one of the most remarkable essays in criticism of our time" (242).

3. *Belphégor : essai sur l'esthétique de la présente société française* [*Belphégor: Essay on the Aesthetic of Contemporary French Society*] (Paris: Emile-Paul Frères, 1918).

4. *Belphégor*, 177-78. *Trans*: "As for society itself, we may foretell that this thirst for emotion through art, becoming in turn itself a cause, will grow more ardent, and the application with which they seek to satisfy it more and more eager and effective. We see before us the day when good French society will repudiate even the slight support they now accord to ideas and organization in art, when their only enthusiasm will be for the comedian's gesture or the impressions of women and children, the thundering of lyric poetry and the ecstatic ravings of the fanatic." *Belphegor*, trans. Sarah J. I. Lawson (London: Faber and Faber, 1929), 131.

5. TSE attended Bergson's weekly lectures at the Collège de France in Jan and Feb 1911.

6. In "Criticism," from which TSE quotes in the preceding section of "Imperfect Critics" ("A Note on the American Critic" [288-89]), Paul Elmer More writes that literary criticism, in its "conscious creation of the field of the present out of the past . . . takes an honoured, if not equal,

place by the side of those impulses, more commonly recognized as creative." *Shelburne Essays, Seventh Series* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1910), 243.

7. TSE regarded Charles-Louis Philippe as a "very limited" novelist, though he had admired his narrative of the Parisian underworld, *Bubu de Montparnasse*, from the time when he first encountered it in 1910. "Preface," *Bubu de Montparnasse*, trans. Laurence Vail (Paris: Crosby, 1932), viii. J. H. E. Crees extols Meredith's stylistic and philosophical mastery in *George Meredith: A Study of his Works and Personality* (1918), in a review of which TSE contended: "most of Meredith's profundity is profound platitude" (1.763).

Introduction[1]

The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism[2]

London: Methuen, 1920. Pp. xviii + 155; Introduction, ix-xv.

To anyone who is at all capable of experiencing the pleasures of justice, it is gratifying to be able to make amends to a writer whom one has vaguely depreciated for some years. The faults and foibles of Matthew Arnold are no less evident to me now than twelve years ago, after my first admiration for him; but I hope that now, on re-reading some of his prose with more care, I can better appreciate his position.[3] And what makes Arnold seem all the more remarkable is, that if he were our exact contemporary, he would find all his labour to perform again. A moderate number of persons have engaged in what is called "critical" writing, but no conclusion is any more solidly established than it was in 1865. In the first essay in the first *Essays in Criticism* we read that

> it has long seemed to me that the burst of creative activity in our literature, through the first quarter of this century, had about it in fact something premature; and that from this cause its productions are doomed, most of them, in spite of the sanguine hopes which accompanied and do still accompany them, to prove hardly more lasting than the productions of far less splendid epochs. And this prematureness comes from its having proceeded without having its proper data, without sufficient material to work with. In other words, the English poetry of the first quarter of this century, with plenty of energy, plenty of creative force, did not know enough. This makes Byron so empty of matter, Shelley so incoherent, Wordsworth even, profound as he is, yet so wanting in completeness and variety.[4]

This judgment of the Romantic Generation has not, so far as I know, ever been successfully controverted; and it has not, so far as I know, ever made very much impression on popular opinion. Once a poet is accepted, his reputation is seldom disturbed, for better or worse. So little impression has Arnold's opinion made, that his statement will probably be as true of the first quarter of the twentieth century as it was of the nineteenth. A few sentences later, Arnold articulates the nature of the malady:

> In the Greece of Pindar and Sophocles, in the England of Shakespeare, the poet lived in a current of ideas in the highest degree animating and nourishing to the creative power; society was, in the fullest measure, permeated by fresh thought, intelligent and alive; and this state of things is the true basis for the creative power's exercise, in this it finds its data, its materials, truly ready for its hand; all the books and reading in the world are only valuable as they are helps to this.

At this point Arnold is indicating the centre of interest and activity of the critical intelligence; and it is at this perception, we may almost say, that Arnold's critical activity stopped. In a society in which the arts were seriously studied, in which the art of writing was respected, Arnold might have become a critic. How astonishing it would be, if a man like Arnold had concerned himself with the art of the novel, had compared Thackeray with Flaubert, had analysed the work of Dickens, had shown his contemporaries exactly why the author of "Amos Barton" is a more *serious* writer than Dickens, and why the author of *La Chartreuse de Parme* is more serious than either?[5] In *Culture and Anarchy*, in *Literature and Dogma*, Arnold was not occupied so much in establishing a criticism as in attacking the uncritical.[6] The difference is that while in constructive work something can be done, destructive work must incessantly be repeated; and furthermore Arnold, in his destruction, went for game outside of the literary preserve altogether, much of it political game untouched and inviolable by ideas. This activity of Arnold's we must regret; it might perhaps have been carried on as effectively, if not quite so neatly, by some disciple (had there been one) in an editorial position on a newspaper. Arnold is not to be blamed: he wasted his strength, as men of superior ability sometimes do, because he saw something to be done and no one else to do it. The temptation, to any man who is interested in ideas and primarily in literature, to put literature into the corner until he has cleaned up the whole country first, is almost irresistible. Some persons, like Mr. Wells and Mr. Chesterton, have succeeded so well in this latter profession of setting the house in order, and have attracted so much more attention than Arnold, that we must conclude that it is indeed their proper rôle, and that they have done well for themselves in laying literature aside.[7]

Not only is the critic tempted outside of criticism. The criticism proper betrays such poverty of ideas and such atrophy of sensibility that men who ought to preserve their critical ability for the improvement of their own

creative work are tempted into criticism. I do not intend from this the usually silly inference that the "Creative"[8†] gift is "higher" than the critical. When one creative mind is better than another, the reason often is that the better is the more critical. But the great bulk of the work of criticism could be done by minds of the second order, and it is just these minds of the second order that are difficult to find. They are necessary for the rapid circulation of ideas. The periodical press – the ideal literary periodical – is an instrument of transport; and the literary periodical press is dependent upon the existence of a sufficient number of second-order (I do not say "second-rate," the word is too derogatory) minds to supply its material. These minds are necessary for that "current of ideas," that "society permeated by fresh thought," of which Arnold speaks.

It is a perpetual heresy of English culture to believe that only the first-order mind, the Genius, the Great Man, matters; that he is solitary, and produced best in the least favourable environment, perhaps the Public School; and that it is most likely a sign of inferiority that Paris can show so many minds of the second order. If too much bad verse is published in London, it does not occur to us to raise our standards, to do anything to educate the poetasters; the remedy is, Kill them off. I quote from Mr. Edmund Gosse:[9*]

> Unless something is done to stem this flood of poetastry the art of verse will become not merely superfluous, but ridiculous. Poetry is not a formula which a thousand flappers and hobbledehoys ought to be able to master in a week without any training, and the mere fact that it seems to be now practised with such universal ease is enough to prove that something has gone amiss with our standards. . . . This is all wrong, and will lead us down into the abyss like so many Gadarene swine unless we resist it.

We quite agree that poetry is not a formula. But what does Mr. Gosse propose to do about it? If Mr. Gosse had found himself in the flood of poetastry in the reign of Elizabeth, what would he have done about it? would he have stemmed it? What exactly is this abyss? and if something "has gone amiss with our standards," is it wholly the fault of the younger generation that it is aware of no authority that it must respect? It is part of the business of the critic to preserve tradition – where a good tradition exists. It is part of his business to see literature steadily and to see it whole; and this is eminently to see it *not* as consecrated by time, but to see it beyond time; to see the best work of our time and the best work of twenty-five hundred years

ago with the same eyes.[10*] It is part of his business to help the poetaster to understand his own limitations. The poetaster who understands his own limitations will be one of our useful second-order minds; a good minor poet (something which is very rare) or another good critic. As for the first-order minds, when they happen, they will be none the worse off for a "current of ideas"; the solitude with which they will always and everywhere be invested is a very different thing from isolation, or a monarchy of death.

NOTE.[11†] – I may commend as a model to critics who desire to correct some of the poetical vagaries of the present age, the following passage from a writer who cannot be accused of flaccid leniency, and the justice of whose criticism must be acknowledged even by those who feel a strong partiality toward the school of poets criticized:

> Yet great labour, directed by great abilities, is never wholly lost; if they frequently threw away their wit upon false conceits, they likewise sometimes struck out unexpected truth: if their conceits were far-fetched, they were often worth the carriage. To write on their plan, it was at least necessary to read and think. No man could be born a metaphysical poet, nor assume the dignity of a writer, by descriptions copied from descriptions, by imitations borrowed from imitations, by traditional imagery, and hereditary similes, by readiness of rhyme, and volubility of syllables.
>
> In perusing the works of this race of authors, the mind is exercised either by recollection or inquiry; something already learned is to be retrieved, or something new is to be examined. If their greatness seldom elevates, their acuteness often surprises; if the imagination is not always gratified, at least the powers of reflection and comparison are employed; and in the mass of materials which ingenious absurdity has thrown together, genuine wit and useful knowledge may be sometimes found buried perhaps in grossness of expression, but useful to those who know their value; and such as, when they are expanded to perspicuity, and polished to elegance, may give lustre to works which have more propriety though less copiousness of sentiment. – Johnson, *Life of Cowley*.[12]

NOTES

1. As printed in *SW*; an earlier version was composed by 3 July 1920 under the title "The Second-Order Mind" for the *Dial*, where it did not appear until December, after *SW* was published on 4 Nov. "I am sending Scofield two articles I have just done on criticism," he told Pound in July, "which I hope he will use soon if at all as I must use them for the book" (*L1* 472). The *Dial* version used no italics or quotation marks to indicate titles.

The following epigraphs appeared on the page adjacent to the title page in *SW*:

(1) "Intravit pinacothecam senex canus, exercitati vultus et qui videretur nescio quid magnum promittere, sed cultu non proinde speciosus, ut facile appareret eum *ex* hac nota litteratum esse, quos odisse divites solent . . . 'ego' inquit 'poeta sum et ut spero, non humillimi spiritus, si modo coronis aliquid credendum est, quas etiam ad immeritos deferre gratia solet.'" – Petronius. *Trans*: "a white-haired old man came into the gallery. His face was troubled, but there seemed to be the promise of some great thing about him; though he was shabby in appearance, so that it was quite plain by this characteristic that he was a man of letters, of the kind that rich men hate. . . . 'I am a poet,' he said, 'and one, I hope, of no mean imagination, if one can reckon at all by crowns of honour, which gratitude can set even on unworthy heads.'" Petronius, *Satyricon* LXXXIII, trans. Michael Heseltine (London: Heinemann, 1913), 167. TSE studied Franz Bücheler's Latin edition, *Petronii saturae et liber priapeorum* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1904), in his 1908-09 course at Harvard with Clifford Moore; the first half of this passage is marked in the margin of his copy (King's). He follows the variants listed in Bücheler's footnotes in substituting "litteratum" and "immeritos" for the standard "litteratorum" and "imperitos"; he revised a mistranscription – *et facile* for *ut facile* – in subsequent editions of *SW*. TSE draws from elsewhere in the *Satyricon* (XLVIII) for the epigraph to *TWL* (*CPP* 37).

(2) "I also like to dine on becaficas." from Byron, *Beppo: A Venetian Story* (1818), the first line of stanza 40, in which the narrator confesses his preference for the exotic cuisine and climate of Italy over the drab fare of England.

SW bore the following dedication: "For H. W. E. "TACUIT ET FECIT"; *Trans*: He was silent and acted. A modified version of the Eliot family motto, which appears in the imperative as Tace et fac ("Be silent and act") on TSE's bookplate. "H. W. E." refers to TSE's father, Henry Ware Eliot, who died on 7 Jan 1919.

2. The title of *SW* likely derives from Sir James Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, which begins with his description of an ancient ritual at the sacred grove or wood at Lake Nemi, south of Rome, during which a candidate for priest-king of the wood could ascend to that office only by plucking a branch from a sacred tree and slaying his predecessor in one-to-one combat. Frazer's aim, he writes, is "to explain the significance of a priest who bore the title of King of the Wood, and one of whose titles to office was the plucking of a bough – the Golden Bough – from a tree in the sacred grove."

3. Discussing this essay with Sidney Schiff on 17 Nov 1920, TSE wrote that Arnold was "not really a free man, in the best sense of the word; who in England was, at his time? . . . Besides, I am using Arnold a little as a stalking horse, or as a cloak of invisibility-respectability to protect me from the elderly. I wanted him as a scarecrow with a real gun under his arm" (*L1* 500-01). Regarding his previous depreciation of Arnold, he remarked to William Knickerbocker in a letter of 12 Apr 1928: "I was referring only to verbal and unspoken comments and not to anything that I had written; I am afraid that there is nothing in print to which I can point as an expression of my earlier opinion" (*L4* 130).

4. "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," *Essays in Criticism*, First Series (1865). In his Everyman edition, *Essays Literary and Critical* (London: Dent, 1914), TSE made marginal marks beside this and the next quoted passage (5).

5. George Eliot, "The Sad Fortunes of the Reverend Amos Barton," in *Scenes of Clerical Life* (1858).

6. *Culture and Anarchy: An Essay in Political and Social Criticism* (1869); *Literature and Dogma: An Essay towards a Better Apprehension of the Bible* (1873).

7. H. G. Wells (1866-1946) had recently published his widely popular *The Outline of History: Being a Plain History of Life and Mankind* (1919-20). G. K. Chesterton was becoming increasingly known for his essays on social criticism, collected in volumes such as *Utopia of Usurers* (1917) and *The Superstition of Divorce* (1920).

8†. In *Dial* (lowercase): "'creative' gift"

9*. TSE's note: "Sunday Times, May 30, 1920." Gosse's article appeared under the title "World of Books: The New Poetry" (7). In *Dial*, TSE incorporated the citation into the text, omitting the footnote: "I quote from Mr. Edmund Gosse in the *Sunday Times* of May 30th, 1920."

10*. TSE's note: "Arnold, it must be admitted, gives us often the impression of seeing the masters, whom he quotes, as canonical literature, rather than as masters"; not included in *Dial*.

11†. Not included in *Dial*.

12. TSE read Samuel Johnson's "Life of Cowley" (1779) and made marginal notes in his edition of *Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets* (London: Frederick Warne, 1872), which he later inscribed to Valerie Eliot with the remark, "with this copy I first became acquainted with Johnson's Lives."

Autobiographical Note

Harvard College Class of 1910, Secretary's Fourth Report

Cambridge, MA: Crimson Printing Co., 1921. 107-08.

Thomas Stearns Eliot

Born	St. Louis, Mo., Sept. 26, 1888.
Parents	Henry Ware Eliot, Charlotte Chauncey Stearns.
School	Smith Academy, St. Louis, Mo.; Milton Academy, Milton, Mass.
Years in College	(1906-1909).
Degrees	A.B., 1910 (1909). A.M., 1911.
Married	Vivien Haigh Haigh-Wood, London, June 26, 1915.
Occupation	Banker, Critic, Poet.
Address	(home) 18 Crawford Mansions, Crawford St., London, W. 1, England. (business) Lloyds Bank Limited, Information Department, London, E. C.

1910-1911: Sorbonne, Paris, studying French language, literature and philosophy. 1911-1914: Harvard University Graduate School: metaphysics, logic, psychology, and Indic philology, Sanskrit and Pali. 1914-1915: Merton College, Oxford: Greek philosophy. 1915-1916: Assistant master, Highgate Junior School: teaching French, Latin, lower mathematics, drawing, swimming, geography, history, and baseball. Highgate School is situated near London. 1918: Dealt with documentary bills, acceptances, and foreign exchange in Lloyds Bank, Ltd., London. Registered for the U. S. Navy.[1] 1918: Information Department, Lloyds Bank, Ltd. Specializing in the Economic Clauses of the Peace Treaty. Contributor at sundry times to *The Monist*, *The International Journal of Ethics*, *Poetry*, *The Little Review*, *The New Statesman*, *The Nation*, *The Saturday Westminster*, *The Manchester Guardian*, *The Chapbook*, *Art and Letters*, *The Athenaeum*, *The Times Literary Supplement*. Books: *Prufrock*, The Egoist, Ltd., London; *Ara Vos Prec*, The Ovid Press, London; *Poems*, The Hogarth Press, London; *Poems*, A. Knopf, New York.[2]

NOTES

1. TSE began inquiries about joining the U.S. Navy in Aug 1918; he collected testimonials for a commission with the U.S. Army Intelligence but encountered a prolonged series of delays and setbacks. He left his position at Lloyds Bank after being approved to join U.S. Navy Intelligence in Oct 1918, but further bureaucratic confusion forced him to return to the bank until the end of the war. He describes the circumstances in detail in letters to his father on 4 Nov and to John Quinn on 13 Nov 1918 (*L1* 286, 299).

2. After *Prufrock and Other Observations* (1917), there appeared the Hogarth Press's limited edition of TSE's *Poems* (1919), followed by *Ara Vos Prec* (1920) in England and its revised American version, *Poems* (1920). Missing from the list are his two critical volumes: *Ezra Pound: His Metric and Poetry* (1917), which was issued anonymously, and *The Sacred Wood* (Nov 1920), which appeared after this note was submitted.

The Romantic Englishman, the Comic Spirit, and the Function of Criticism[1]

The Tyro: A Review of the Arts of Painting, Sculpture, and Design, 1 (Spring 1921) 4

Sir Tunbelly Clumsy, Sir Giles Overreach, Squire Western, and Sir Sampson Legend, who was lately so competently revived by Mr. Byford at the Phoenix, are different contributions by distinguished mythmakers to the chief myth which the Englishman has built about himself.[2] The myth that a man makes has transformations according as he sees himself as hero or villain, as young or old, but it is essentially the same myth; Tom Jones is not the same person, but he is the same myth, as Squire Western; Midshipman Easy is part of the same myth;[3] Falstaff is elevated above the myth to dwell on Olympus, more than a national character. Tennyson's broad-shouldered genial Englishman is a cousin of Tunbelly Clumsy; and Mr. Chesterton, when he drinks a glass of beer (if he does drink beer), and Mr. Squire, when he plays a game of cricket (if he does play cricket), contribute their little bit.[4] This myth has seldom been opposed or emulated; Byron, a great mythmaker did, it is true, set up the Giaour, a myth for the whole of Europe.[5] But in our time, barren of myths – when in France there is no successor to the *honnête homme qui ne se pique de rien*, and René, and the dandy, but only a deliberate school of mythopoeic nihilism – in our time the English myth is pitiably diminished.[6] There is that degenerate descendent, the modern John Bull, the John Bull who usually alternates with Britannia in the cartoons of *Punch*, a John Bull composed of Podsnap and Bottomley.[7] And John Bull becomes less and less a force, even in a purely political role.

The theatre, naturally the best platform for the myth, affords in our time singularly little relief. What a poor showing, the military and nautical V.C.'s, the Spy, the Girl who sank the Submarine![8] The Englishman with a craving for the ideal (there are, we believe, a good many) famishes in the stalls of the modern theatre. The exotic spectacle, the sunshine of *Chu Chin Chow*, is an opiate rather than a food.[9] Man desires to see himself on the stage, more admirable, more forceful, more villainous, more comical, more despicable – and more much else – than he actually is. He has only

the opportunity of seeing himself, sometimes, a little better dressed. The romantic Englishman is in a bad way.

It is only perhaps in the music hall, and sometimes in the cinema, that we have an opportunity for partial realization. Charlie Chaplin is not English, or American, but a universal figure, feeding the idealism of hungry millions in Czecho-Slovakia and Peru.[10] But the English comedian supplies in part, and unconsciously, the defect: Little Tich, Robey, Nellie Wallace, Marie Lloyd, Mozart, Lupino Lane, George Graves, Robert Hale, and others, provide fragments of a possible English myth.[11] They effect the Comic Purgation. The romantic Englishman, feeling in himself the possibility of being as funny as these people, is purged of unsatisfied desire, transcends himself, and unconsciously lives the myth, seeing life in the light of imagination. What is sometimes called "vulgarity" is therefore one thing that has not been vulgarised.

Only unconsciously, however, is the Englishman willing to accept his own ideal. If he were aware that the fun of the comedian was more than fun he would be unable to accept it; just as, in all probability, if the comedian were aware that his fun was more than fun he might be unable to perform it. The audience do not realize that the performance of Little Tich is a compliment, and a criticism, of themselves. Neither could they appreciate the compliment, or swallow the criticism, implied by the unpleasant persons whom Jonson put upon the stage. The character of the serious stage, when he is not simply a dull ordinary person, is confected of abstract qualities, as loyalty, greed, and so on, to which we are supposed to respond with the proper abstract emotions. But the myth is not composed of abstract qualities; it is a point of view, transmuted to importance; it is made by the transformation of the actual by imaginative genius.

The modern dramatist, and probably the modern audience, is terrified of the myth. The myth is imagination and it is also criticism, and the two are one. The Seventeenth Century had its own machinery of virtues and vices, as we have, but its drama is a criticism of humanity far more serious than its conscious moral judgments. *Volpone* does not merely show that wickedness is punished; it criticises humanity by intensifying wickedness. How we are reassured about ourselves when we make the acquaintance of such a person on the stage! I do not for a moment suggest that anyone is affected by *Volpone* or any of the colossal Seventeenth Century figures as the newspapers say little boys are by cinema desperados.[12] The myth is degraded

by the child who points a loaded revolver at another, or ties his sister to a post, or rifles a sweet-shop; the Seventeenth Century populace was not appreciably modified by its theatre; and a great theatre in our own time would not transform the retired colonel from Maida Vale into a Miles Gloriosus.[13] The myth is based upon reality, but does not alter it. The material was never very fine, or the Seventeenth Century men essentially superior to ourselves, more intelligent or more passionate. They were surrounded, indeed, by fewer prohibitions, freer than the millhand, or the petrified product which the public school pours into our illimitable suburbs.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Composed shortly after 20 Mar 1921, this and "The Lesson of Baudelaire" were TSE's first contributions to *The Tyro*, founded by Wyndham Lewis as a successor to *Blast* (1914-15) (see illustration 16). When he began discussing the new paper with Lewis in July 1920, TSE recommended that it should "give the effect of a nucleus of intelligent independent and powerful opinion about art" (*L1* 478). Published by the Egoist Press, the first issue appeared on 9 Apr 1921, timed to coincide with the opening of Lewis's first major solo exhibition, and featured TSE's "Song to the Opherian," published under the pseudonym Gus Krutzsch. In the table of contents, this essay and "The Lesson of Baudelaire" are combined under the heading "Notes on Current Letters."

2. TSE's list of comic characters – Tunbelly Clumsy in Sir John Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1697); Sir Giles Overreach in Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*; Squire Western in Henry Fielding's *The History of Tom Jones, A Foundling* (1749); Samson Legend in Congreve's *Love for Love: A Comedy* (1695) – includes wealthy English father figures who are to varying degrees foolhardy, miserly, and violent. TSE saw Roy Byford (1873-1939) as Sampson Legend in the Phoenix Society's performance of *Love for Love* at the Lyric Theatre on 20 Mar; Virginia Woolf recalls him laughing aloud (*Diary 2:*103-04).

3. The protagonist of Frederick Marryat's *Mr. Midshipman Easy* (1836) leaves behind his country estate and gentleman father and finds adventure at sea before finally returning to England to become an MP and respectable country gentleman himself.

4. Tennyson uses the phrase "broad-shouldered genial Englishman" to describe the wealthy English gentleman Sir Walter Vivian in the conclusion to his *The Princess: A Medley* (1847). TSE considered both Chesterton and Squire inheritors of a conservative, moralistic tradition in English journalism.

5. TSE refers to the melancholy, "infidel" protagonist of *The Giaour, A Fragment of a Turkish Tale* (1813) – the first of Byron's popular Oriental verse narratives – which influenced painters and writers, including Eugène Delacroix (in *The Combat of the Giaour and Hassan*), Edgar Allan Poe (in *Tamerlane*), and John William Polidori (in *The Vampyre*).

6. Three influential social types of leisure and refinement: the seventeenth-century *honnête homme* or well-bred gentleman; "René," based on the melancholy, wandering protagonist of Chateaubriand's eponymous novella (1802); and the nineteenth-century dandy popularized by Beau Brummell in England. TSE condenses Rochefoucauld's Maxim 203: "Le vrai honnête

homme est celui qui ne se pique de rien" [The true gentleman is one who takes no offense]. "Mythopoetic nihilism" may refer to Dadaism, which TSE addresses in the accompanying essay, "The Lesson of Baudelaire" (306).

7. Cartoons in *Punch* regularly portrayed Britain by either the simple country gentleman John Bull – a tamed version of the bluff, well-fed character created by satirist John Arbuthnot in 1712 – or the lofty, allegorical female figure Brittania. Mr. Podsnap is the wealthy, bumbling English gentleman in Dickens's *Our Mutual Friend* (1865), the novel from which TSE also drew the original title of *The Waste Land*: "He Do the Police in Different Voices." Horatio Bottomley (1860-1933), editor of the conservative weekly *John Bull*, was an outspoken politician and infamous swindler.

8. TSE may have in mind plays like Clifford Mills's *The Luck of the Navy: A Naval Play in Three Acts*, which played at the queen's theatre in Oct 1920 and starred Percy Hutchinson as an English nautical V.C. ("Victoria Cross," Britain's highest military decoration) in a contest of wits with German spies; or Bernard Shaw's one-act parody *O'Flaherty, V.C.: A Recruiting Pamphlet*, which played at the Lyric Threatre in Dec 1920. He also alludes to popular war songs such as "The Girl Who Loves a Soldier" and "The Girl Who Helps the Man behind the Gun."

9. Oscar Asche's big-budget comic musical *Chu Chin Chow*, based on *Arabian Nights*, featured lavish foreign sets, dances, and costumes; it opened in Aug 1916 and ran for more than 2000 performances until July 1921.

10. English silent film actor and director, Charlie Chaplin (1889-1977).

11. Music hall performers Little Tich, the stage name of Harry Relph (1867-1928), George Robey or George Edward Wade (1869-1954), Nellie Wallace (1870-1948), Marie Lloyd (1870-1922), George Mozart or David John Gillings (1864-1947), Lupino Lane or Henry Lupino (1892-1959), George Graves (1876-1949), and Robert Hale (1874-1940).

12. For instance, in "Films which Encourage Crime," the *Times* (4 Sept 1915) reported on "the evil influences of certain scenes at some of the picture palaces" and "their most pernicious influence on the minds of young children" (3).

13. The *miles gloriosus*, or "braggart soldier," was a stock character in Roman comedy and the prototype for similar figures in Elizabethan drama, such as Captain Bobadill in Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*, to which TSE likely refers. Maida Vale is a prosperous residential district in Northwest London.

The Lesson of Baudelaire[1]

The Tyro: A Review of the Arts of Painting, Sculpture, and Design, 1 (Spring 1921) 4

With regard to certain intellectual activities across the Channel, which at the moment appear to take the place of poetry in the life of Paris, some effort ought to be made to arrive at an intelligent point of view on this side. It is probable that this French performance is of value almost exclusively for the local audience; I do not here assert that it has any value at all, only that its pertinence, if it has any, is to a small public formidably well instructed in its own literary history, erudite and stuffed with tradition to the point of bursting. Undoubtedly the French man of letters is much better read in French literature than the English man of letters is in any literature; and the educated English poet of our day must be too conscious, by his singularity in that respect, of what he knows, to form a parallel to the Frenchman. If French culture is too uniform, monotonous,[2*] English culture, when it is found, is too freakish and odd. Dadaism is a diagnosis of a disease of the French mind; whatever lesson we extract from it will not be directly applicable in London.[3]

Whatever value there may be in Dada depends upon the extent to which it is a moral criticism of French literature and French life. All first-rate poetry is occupied with morality: this is the lesson of Baudelaire. More than any poet of his time, Baudelaire was aware of what most mattered: the problem of good and evil. What gives the French Seventeenth Century literature its solidity is the fact that it had its Morals, that it had a coherent point of view. Romanticism endeavoured to form another Morals – Rousseau, Byron, Goethe, Poe were moralists. But they have not sufficient coherence; not only was the foundation of Rousseau rotten, his structure was chaotic and inconsistent. Baudelaire, a deformed Dante (somewhat after the intelligent Barbey d'Aurevilly's phrase), aimed, with more intellect *plus* intensity, and without much help from his predecessors, to arrive at a point of view toward good and evil.[4]

English poetry, all the while, either evaded the responsibility, or assumed it with too little seriousness. The Englishman had too much fear, or too much respect, for morality to dream that possibly or necessarily he should

be concerned with it, *vom Haus aus*, in poetry.[5] This it is that makes some of the most distinguished English poets so trifling. Is anyone seriously interested in Milton's view of good and evil? Tennyson decorated the morality he found in vogue; Browning really approached the problem, but with too little seriousness, with too much complacency; thus *The Ring and the Book* just misses greatness – as the revised version of *Hyperion* almost, or just, touches it.[6] As for the verse of the present time, the lack of curiosity in technical matters, of the academic poets of to-day (Georgian et caetera) is only an indication of their lack of curiosity in moral matters. On the other hand, the poets who consider themselves most opposed to Georgianism, and who know a little French, are mostly such as could imagine the Last Judgment only as a lavish display of Bengal lights, Roman candles, catherine-wheels, and inflammable fire-balloons.[7] *Vous, hypocrite lecteur . . . .*[8]

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. This was second of the set of two essays (with "The Romantic Englishman," 302) that TSE published in the first issue of Wyndham Lewis's *The Tyro*.

2*. TSE's note: "Not without qualification. M. Valéry is a mathematician; M. Benda is a mathematician and a musician. These, however, are men of exceptional intelligence."

3. The avant-garde artistic and cultural movement Dadaism began in Zurich in 1916 but came to Paris under the leadership of Tristan Tzara in Jan 1920. The most recent public event was the appearance of the manifesto *Dada soulève tout* [Dada Stirs Up Everything], published to coincide with the Dadaist protest at a lecture by futurist Filippo Marinetti on 15 Jan 1921. TSE reviewed Tzara's *vingt-cinq poèmes* in 1919 (66).

4. Jules Amédée Barbey d'Aurevilly (1808-89) makes the comparison in an untitled defense of *Les Fleurs du mal*: "Il y a du Dante, en effet, dans l'auteur des *Fleurs du mal*, mais c'est du Dante d'une époque déchue, c'est du Dante athée et moderne, du Dante venu après Voltaire, dans un temps qui n'aura point de saint Thomas" [There is something of Dante, indeed, in the author of the *Fleurs du mal*, but it is a Dante of a fallen age, it is a Dante who is atheist and modern, a Dante who came after Voltaire, in a time which will not have a St. Thomas]. *Articles justificatifs pour Charles Baudelaire* (Paris: Dondey-Dupré, 1857), 15.

5. *vom Haus aus*: a variant of the German expression *von Hause aus*, meaning "naturally" or "inherently."

6. Browning, *The Ring and the Book* (1868-69); Keats, *The Fall of Hyperion* (written ca. 1819; published 1856).

7. TSE refers to the poets published in the several anthologies titled *Wheels*, which he reviewed in "Verse Pleasant and Unpleasant" and "The Post-Georgians" (1.679; 2.16); among them was Aldous Huxley, whose "The Burning Wheel" (1916) describes the leaping spark of a wheel that spins toward the end of time, when "once again / Flame billows out to infinity."

8. *Trans*: You, hypocrite reader. . . ; a modified version of the last line of Baudelaire's "Au Lecteur" (To the Reader): "Hypocrite lecteur, – mon semblable, – mon frère" [Hypocrite reader, my double, my brother]; the line appears with a similar modification at the end of "The Burial of the Dead" in *The Waste Land*: "You! hypocrite lecteur! – mon semblable, – mon frère!" (*CPP* 39).

Andrew Marvell[1]

The tercentenary of the former member for Hull deserves not only the celebration proposed by that favoured borough,[2†] but a little serious reflection upon his writing.[3] That is an act of piety, which is very different from the resurrection of a deceased reputation. Marvell has stood high for some years; his best poems are not very many, and not only must be well known, from the *Golden Treasury* and the *Oxford Book of English Verse*, but must also have been enjoyed by numerous readers. His grave needs neither rose nor rue nor laurel; there is no imaginary justice to be done; we may think about him, if there be need for thinking, for our own benefit, not his. To bring the poet back to life – the great, the perennial, task of criticism – is in this case to squeeze the drops of the essence of two or three poems; even confining ourselves to these, we may find some precious liquor unknown to the present age. Not to determine rank, but to isolate this quality, is the critical labour. The fact that of all Marvell's verse, which is itself not a great quantity, the really valuable part consists of a very few poems indicates that the unknown quality of which we speak is probably a literary rather than a personal quality; or, more truly, that it is a quality of a civilization, of a traditional habit of life. A poet like Donne, or like Baudelaire or Laforgue, may almost be considered the inventor of an attitude, a system of feeling or of morals. Donne is difficult to analyse: what appears at one time a curious personal point of view may at another time appear rather the precise concentration of a kind of feeling diffused in the air about him. Donne and his shroud, the shroud and his motive for wearing it, are inseparable, but they are not the same thing.[4] The seventeenth century sometimes seems for more than a moment to gather up and to digest into its art all the experience of the human mind which (from the same point of view) the later centuries seem to have been partly engaged in repudiating. But Donne would have been an individual at any time and place; Marvell's best verse is the product of European, that is to say Latin, culture.

Out of that high style developed from Marlowe through Jonson (for Shakespeare does not lend himself to these genealogies) the seventeenth century separated two qualities: wit and magniloquence. Neither is as simple or as apprehensible as its name seems to imply, and the two are not

in practice antithetical; both are conscious and cultivated, and the mind which cultivates one may cultivate the other. The actual poetry, of Marvell, of Cowley, of Milton, and of others, is a blend in varying proportions. And we must be on guard not to employ the terms with too wide a comprehension; for like the other fluid terms with which literary criticism deals, the meaning alters with the age, and for precision we must rely to some degree upon the literacy and good taste of the reader. The wit of the Caroline poets is not the wit of Shakespeare, and it is not the wit of Dryden, the great master of contempt, or of Pope, the great master of hatred, or of Swift, the great master of disgust. What is meant is some quality which is common to the songs[5†] in *Comus* and Cowley's Anacreontics and Marvell's Horatian Ode. It is more than a technical accomplishment, or the vocabulary and syntax of an epoch; it is, what we have designated tentatively as wit, a tough reasonableness beneath the slight lyric grace. You cannot find it in Shelley or Keats or Wordsworth; you cannot find more than an echo of it in Landor; still less in Tennyson or Browning; and among contemporaries Mr. Yeats is an Irishman and Mr. Hardy is a modern Englishman – that is to say, Mr. Hardy is without it and Mr. Yeats is outside of the tradition altogether. On the other hand, as it certainly exists in Lafontaine, there is a large part of it in Gautier.[6] And of the magniloquence, the deliberate exploitation of the possibilities of magnificence in language which Milton used and abused, there is also use and even abuse in the poetry of Baudelaire.

Wit is not a quality that we are accustomed to associate with "Puritan" literature, with Milton or with Marvell. But if so, we are at fault partly in our conception of wit and partly in our generalizations about the Puritans. And if the wit of Dryden or of Pope is not the only kind of wit in the language, the rest is not merely a little merriment or a little levity or a little impropriety or a little epigram. And, on the other hand, the sense in which a man like Marvell is a "Puritan" is restricted.[7] The persons who opposed Charles I and the persons who supported the Commonwealth were not all of the flock of Zeal-of-the-land Busy or the United Grand Junction Ebenezer Temperance Association.[8†] Many of them were gentlemen of the time who merely believed, with considerable show of reason, that government by a Parliament of gentlemen was better than government by a Stuart; though they were, to that extent, Liberal Practitioners, they could hardly foresee the tea-meeting and the Dissidence of Dissent.[9] Being men of education and culture, even of travel, some of them were exposed to that spirit of the age which was

coming to be the French spirit of the age. This spirit, curiously enough, was quite opposed to the tendencies latent or the forces active in Puritanism; the contest does great damage to the poetry of Milton; Marvell, an active servant of the public, but a lukewarm partisan, and a poet on a smaller scale, is far less injured by it. His line on the statue of Charles II, "It is such a King as no chisel can mend," may be set off against his criticism of the Great Rebellion: "Men . . . ought and might have trusted the King."[10] Marvell, therefore, more a man of the century than a Puritan, speaks more clearly and unequivocally with the voice of his literary age than does Milton.

This voice speaks out uncommonly strong in the "Coy Mistress."[11] The theme is one of the great traditional commonplaces of European literature. It is the theme of "O mistress mine," of "Gather ye rosebuds," of "Go, lovely rose"; it is in the savage austerity of Lucretius and the intense levity of Catullus.[12] Where the wit of Marvell renews the theme is in the variety and order of the images. In the first of the three paragraphs Marvell plays with a fancy which begins by pleasing and leads to astonishment.

> Had we but world enough and time,
> This coyness, lady, were no crime,
>
> . . . I would
> Love you ten years before the Flood,
> And you should, if you please, refuse
> Till the conversion of the Jews;
> My vegetable love should grow
> Vaster than empires and more slow. . . .

We notice the high speed, the succession of concentrated images, each magnifying the original fancy. When this process has been carried to the end and summed up, the poem turns suddenly with that surprise which has been one of the most important means of poetic effect since Homer:

> But at my back I always hear
> Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near,
> And yonder all before us lie
> Deserts of vast eternity.[13]

A whole civilization resides in these lines:

Pallida Mors æquo pulsat[14†] pede pauperum tabernas,
Regumque turris. . . .[15†]

And not only Horace but Catullus himself:

Nobis, cum semel occidit brevis lux,
Nox est perpetua una dormienda.[16]

The verse of Marvell has not the grand reverberation of Catullus's Latin; but the image of Marvell is certainly more comprehensive and penetrates greater depths than Horace's.[17†]

A modern poet, had he reached the height, would very likely have closed on this moral reflection. But the three strophes of Marvell's poem have something like a syllogistic relation to each other. After a close approach to the mood of Donne,

then worms shall try
That long-preserved virginity . . .
The grave's a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace,

the conclusion,

Let us roll all our strength and all
Our sweetness up into one ball,
And tear our pleasures with rough strife,
Thorough the iron gates of life.[18]

It will hardly be denied that this poem contains wit; but it may not be evident that this wit forms the crescendo and diminuendo of a scale of great imaginative power. The wit is not only combined with, but fused into, the imagination. We can easily recognize a witty fancy in the successive images ("my *vegetable* love," "till the conversion of the Jews"), but this fancy is not indulged, as it sometimes is by Cowley or Cleveland, for its own sake.[19] It is structural decoration of a serious idea. In this it is superior to the fancy of "L'Allegro," "Il Penseroso," or the lighter and less successful poems of Keats. In fact, this alliance of levity and seriousness (by which the seriousness is intensified) is a characteristic of the sort of wit we are trying to identify. It is found in

Le squelette était invisible
Au temps heureux de l'art païen![20]

of Gautier, and in the *dandysme* of Baudelaire and Laforgue. It is in the poem of Catullus which has been quoted, and in the variation by Ben Jonson:

> Cannot we delude the eyes
> Of a few poor household spies?
> 'Tis no sin love's fruits to steal;
> But the sweet thefts to reveal,
> To be taken, to be seen,
> These have crimes accounted been.[21†]

It is in Propertius and Ovid. It is a quality of a sophisticated literature; a quality which expands in English literature just at the moment before the English mind altered; it is not a quality which we should expect Puritanism to encourage. When we come to Gray and Collins, the sophistication remains only in the language, and has disappeared from the feeling. Gray and Collins were masters, but they had lost that hold on human values, that firm grasp of human experience, which is a formidable achievement of the Elizabethan and Jacobean poets. This wisdom, cynical perhaps but untired (in Shakespeare, a terrifying clairvoyance), leads toward, and is only completed by, the religious comprehension; it leads to the point of the *Ainsi tout leur a craqué dans la main* of Bouvard and Pécuchet.[22]

The difference between imagination and fancy, in view of this poetry of wit, is a very narrow one. Obviously, an image which is immediately and unintentionally ridiculous is merely a fancy. In the poem "Upon Appleton House," Marvell falls in with one of these undesirable images, describing the attitude of the house toward its master:

> Yet thus the laden house does sweat,
> And scarce endures the master great;
> But, where he comes, the swelling hall
> Stirs, and the square grows spherical;[23]

which, whatever its intention, is more absurd than it was intended to be. Marvell also falls into the even commoner error of images which are over-developed or distracting; which support nothing but their own misshapen bodies:

> And now the salmon-fishers moist
> Their leathern boats begin to hoist;

> And, like Antipodes in shoes,
> Have shod their heads in their canoes.

Of this sort of image a choice collection may be found in Johnson's *Life of Cowley*.[24] But the images in the "Coy Mistress" are not only witty, but satisfy the elucidation of Imagination given by Coleridge:

> This power . . . reveals itself in the balance or reconcilement of opposite or discordant qualities: of sameness, with difference; of the general, with the concrete; the idea with the image; the individual with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness with old and familiar objects; a more than usual state of emotion with more than usual order; judgment ever awake and steady self-possession with enthusiasm and feeling profound or vehement. . . .[25]

Coleridge's statement applies also to the following verses, which are selected because of their similarity, and because they illustrate the marked caesura which Marvell often introduces in a short line:

> The tawny mowers enter next,
> Who seem like Israelites to be
> Walking on foot through a green sea. . . .
>
> And now the meadows fresher dyed,
> Whose grass, with moister colour dashed,
> Seems as green silks but newly washed. . . .
>
> He hangs in shades the orange bright,
> Like golden lamps in a green night. . . .
>
> Annihilating all that's made
> To a green thought in a green shade. . . .
>
> Had it lived long, it would have been
> Lilies without, roses within.[26]

The whole poem, from which the last of these quotations is drawn ("The Nymph and the Fawn"), is built upon a very slight foundation, and we can imagine what some of our modern practitioners of slight themes would have made of it. But we need not descend to an invidious contemporaneity to point the difference. Here are six lines from "The Nymph and the Fawn":

I have a garden of my own,
But so with roses overgrown
And lilies, that you would it guess
To be a little wilderness;
And all the spring-time of the year
It only lovèd to be there.

And here are five lines from "The Nymph's Song to Hylas" in the *Life and Death of Jason*, by William Morris:

I know a little garden close
Set thick with lily and red rose,
Where I would wander if I might
From dewy dawn to dewy night,
And have one with me wandering.[27]

So far the resemblance is more striking than the difference, although we might just notice the vagueness of allusion in the last line to some indefinite person, form, or phantom, compared with the more explicit reference of emotion to object which we should expect from Marvell. But in the latter part of the poem Morris divaricates widely:

Yet tottering as I am, and weak,
Still have I left a little breath
To seek within the jaws of death
An entrance to that happy place;
To seek the unforgotten face
Once seen, once kissed, once reft from me
Anigh the murmuring of the sea.[28]

Here the resemblance, if there is any, is to the latter part of "The Coy Mistress." As for the difference, it could not be more pronounced. The effect of Morris's charming poem depends upon the mistiness of the feeling and the vagueness of its object; the effect of Marvell's upon its bright, hard precision. And this precision is not due to the fact that Marvell is concerned with cruder or simpler or more carnal emotions. The emotion of Morris is not more refined or more spiritual; it is merely more vague: if anyone doubts whether the more refined or spiritual emotion can be precise, he should study the treatment of the varieties of discarnate emotion in the *Paradiso*.[29] A curious result of the comparison of Morris's poem with

Marvell's is that the former, though it appears to be more serious, is found to be the slighter; and Marvell's "Nymph and the Fawn,"[30†] appearing more slight, is the more serious.

So weeps the wounded balsam; so
The holy frankincense doth flow;
The brotherless Heliades
Melt in such amber tears as these.

These verses have the suggestiveness of true poetry; and the verses of Morris, which are nothing if not an attempt to suggest, really suggest nothing; and we are inclined to infer that the suggestiveness is the aura around a bright clear centre, that you cannot have the aura alone. The day-dreamy feeling of Morris is essentially a slight thing; Marvell takes a slight affair, the feeling of a girl for her pet, and gives it a connexion with that inexhaustible and terrible nebula of emotion which surrounds all our exact and practical passions and mingles with them. Again, Marvell does this in a poem which, because of its formal pastoral machinery, may appear a trifling object:

CLORINDA. Near this, a fountain's liquid bell
Tinkles within the concave shell.
DAMON. Might a soul bathe there and be clean,
Or slake its drought?[31]

where we find that a metaphor has suddenly rapt us to the image of spiritual purgation. There is here the element of *surprise*, as when Villon says:

Necessité faict gens mesprendre,
Et faim saillir les loup des boys,[32†]

the surprise which Poe considered of the highest importance, and also the restraint and quietness of tone which make the surprise possible.[33] And in the verses of Marvell which have been quoted there is the making the familiar strange, and the strange familiar, which Coleridge attributed to good poetry.

The effort to construct a dream world, which alters English poetry so greatly in the nineteenth century, a dream world utterly different from the visionary realities of the *Vita Nuova* or of the poetry of Dante's contemporaries, is a problem of which various explanations may no doubt be found; in any case, the result makes a poet of the nineteenth century, of the same

size as Marvell, a more trivial and less serious figure. Marvell is no greater personality than William Morris, but he had something much more solid behind him: he had the vast and penetrating influence of Ben Jonson. Jonson never wrote anything purer than Marvell's "Horatian Ode"; this ode[34†] has that same quality of wit which was diffused over the whole Elizabethan product and concentrated in the work of Jonson. And, as was said before, this wit which pervades the poetry of Marvell is more Latin, more refined, than anything that succeeded it. The great danger, as well as the great interest and excitement, of English prose and verse, compared with French, is that it permits and justifies an exaggeration of particular qualities to the exclusion of others. Dryden was great in wit, as Milton in magniloquence; but the former, by isolating this quality and making it by itself into great poetry, and the latter, by coming to dispense with it altogether, may perhaps have injured the language. In Dryden wit becomes almost fun, and thereby loses some contact with reality; becomes pure fun, which French wit almost never is.

> The midwife placed her hand on his thick skull,
> With this prophetic blessing: *Be thou dull*. . . .
>
> A numerous host of dreaming saints succeed,
> Of the true old enthusiastic breed.[35]

This is audacious and splendid; it belongs to satire beside which Marvell's Satires are random babbling, but it is perhaps as exaggerated as:

> Oft he seems to hide his face,
> But unexpectedly returns,
> And to his faithful champion hath in place
> Bore witness gloriously; whence Gaza mourns,
> And all that band them to resist
> His uncontrollable intent.[36]

How oddly the sharp Dantesque phrase "whence Gaza mourns" springs out from the brilliant contortions[37†] of Milton's sentence!

> Who from his private gardens, where
> He lived reservèd and austere,
> (As if his highest plot
> To plant the bergamot)

Could by industrious valour climb
To ruin the great work of Time,
And cast the kingdoms old
Into another mold;
. . . .
The Pict no shelter now shall find
Within his parti-coloured mind,
But, from this valour sad,
Shrink underneath the plaid:[38]

There is here an equipoise, a balance and proportion of tones, which, while it cannot raise Marvell to the level of Dryden or Milton, extorts an approval which these poets do not receive from us, and bestows a pleasure at least different in kind from any they can often give. It is what makes Marvell a classic; or classic in a sense in which[39†] Gray and Collins are not; for the latter, with all their accredited purity, are comparatively poor in shades of feeling to contrast and unite.

We are baffled in the attempt to translate the quality indicated by the dim and antiquated term wit into the equally unsatisfactory nomenclature of our own time. Even Cowley is only able to define it by negatives:

Comely in thousand shapes appears;
Yonder we saw it plain; and here 'tis now,
Like spirits in a place, we know not how.[40]

It has passed out of our critical coinage altogether, and no new term has been struck to replace it; the quality seldom exists, and is never recognized.

In a true piece of Wit all things must be,
Yet all things there agree;
As in the Ark, join'd without force or strife,
All creatures dwelt, all creatures that had life.
Or as the primitive forms of all
(If we compare great things with small)
Which, without discord or confusion, lie
In that strange mirror of the Deity.

So far Cowley has spoken well. But if we are to attempt even no more than Cowley, we, placed in a retrospective attitude, must risk much more than

anxious generalizations. With our eye still on Marvell, we can say that wit is not erudition; it is sometimes stifled by erudition, as in much of Milton. It is not cynicism, though it has a kind of toughness which may be confused with cynicism by the tender-minded. It is confused with erudition because it belongs to an educated mind, rich in generations of experience; and it is confused with cynicism because it implies a constant inspection and criticism of experience. It involves, probably, a recognition, implicit in the expression of every experience, of other kinds of experience which are possible, which we find as clearly in the greatest as in poets like Marvell. Such a general statement may seem to take us a long way from "The Nymph and the Fawn," or even from the "Horatian Ode"; but it is perhaps justified by the desire to account for that precise taste of Marvell's which finds for him the proper degree of seriousness for every subject which he treats. His errors of taste, when he trespasses, are not sins against this virtue; they are conceits, distended metaphors and similes, but they never consist in taking a subject too seriously or too lightly. This virtue of wit is not a peculiar quality of minor poets, or of the minor poets of one age or of one school; it is an intellectual quality which perhaps only becomes noticeable by itself, in the work of lesser poets. Furthermore, it is absent from the work of Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats, on whose poetry nineteenth-century criticism has unconsciously been based. To the best of their poetry wit is irrelevant:

> Art thou pale for weariness
> Of climbing heaven and gazing on the earth,
> Wandering companionless
> Among the stars that have a different birth,
> And ever changing, like a joyless eye,
> That finds no object worth its constancy?[41]

We should find it difficult to draw any useful comparison between these lines of Shelley and anything by Marvell. But later poets, who would have been the better for Marvell's quality, were without it; even Browning seems oddly immature, in some way, beside Marvell. And nowadays we find occasionally good irony, or satire, which lack wit's internal equilibrium, because their voices are essentially protests against some outside sentimentality or stupidity; or we find serious poets who seem afraid of acquiring wit,[42†] lest they lose intensity. The quality which Marvell had, this modest and certainly impersonal virtue – whether we call it wit or reason, or even

urbanity – we have patently failed to define. By whatever name we call it, and however we define that name, it is something precious and needed and apparently extinct; it is what should preserve the reputation of Marvell. *C'était une belle âme, comme on ne fait plus à Londres*.[43]

NOTES

1. As printed in *SE*; originally published in *TLS*, 1002 (13 Mar 1921), 201-02; reprinted in *Andrew Marvell, 1621-1678, Tercentenary Tributes*, ed. W. H. Bagguley (London: Oxford UP, 1922) 63-78 [hereafter *Tributes*]; reprinted by the Hogarth Press as the last of three essays in *Homage to John Dryden* (30 Oct 1924).

2†. In *Tributes*: "that favoured city"

3. Marvell was member of Parliament for Kingston upon Hull in Northern England from 1659 until his death; the tercentenary celebrations sponsored by the city took place on 31 Mar 1921.

4. TSE's metaphor makes reference to the funeral shroud that, as Izaak Walton relates, Donne wore for the portrait on which he subsequently meditated until his death.

5†. In *TLS* and *HJD*: "What is meant is something which is a common quality to the songs"; in *Tributes*: "a quality common to the songs"

TSE refers to the five rhymed, lyric songs interspersed among the otherwise unrhymed dramatic verse in Milton's *Comus*; to Abraham Cowley's *Anacreontiques* (*Poems*, 1656), which comprises poems in imitation of the Greek poet Anacreon; and to Marvell's "An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland," published posthumously in 1681.

6. French fabulist and poet Jean de La Fontaine (1621-95), author of *Fables choisies* [Selected Fables] (1694).

7. Marvell was not a Puritan, though during the English Civil Wars he supported the Parliamentarians, many of whom were. He served as Latin Secretary under the Puritan Commonwealth regime of Oliver Cromwell – whose nephew he tutored – and retained his post as a member of Parliament even after the Restoration of Charles II.

8†. In *TLS*, *Tributes*, and *HJD*: "flock of Rabbi Zeal-of-the-land Busy"

TSE satirizes the Puritan and Presbyterian constituency of the Parliamentarians – who opposed Stuart King Charles I (1600-49) during the English Civil Wars and established the Commonwealth after his execution – by aligning them with the hypocritical Puritan divine, Rabbi Busy, from Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*, and with the fictional United Grand Junction Ebenezer Temperance Association, which meets in chapter 33 of Dickens's *The Pickwick Papers*.

9. The iconic demonstration against the British government in Dec 1773 known as the Boston Tea Party was the result of British American colonial resistance to the Tea Act imposed by the British Parliament. "Dissidence of Dissent" is Edmund Burke's phrase from "Speech on Conciliation with America" (1775), wherein he characterizes the religious sensibility of the Northern Colonies as "a refinement on the principle of resistance . . . the dissidence of dissent." TSE likely recalls the appearance of the phrase in "Sweetness and Light," in *Culture and Anarchy*, where Matthew Arnold identifies it with nineteenth-century middle-class liberalism.

10. The first line is from the penultimate stanza of Marvell's "A Poem on the Statue in Stocks-Market" (1689), a satire (the authorship of which is now disputed) on a poorly refurbished

statue of Restoration King Charles II (1630-85). The second is from his controversial political tract, *The Rehearsal Transpros'd* (1672), which describes the English Civil War as a "cause too good to have been fought for. Men ought to have trusted God; they ought and might have trusted the king in this matter." Both are quoted in the biographical introduction to the Muses' Library edition that TSE owned and lightly marked, *The Poems of Andrew Marvell, Sometime Member of Parliament for Hull*, ed. G. A. Aitken (London: Lawrence and Bullen, 1898).

11. "To his Coy Mistress" (1681).

12. These three variations on the "carpe diem" theme all appear in Quiller-Couch's *Oxford Book of Modern Verse*, including "O Mistress mine" – excerpted from Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* (II.iii) – Robert Herrick's "To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time" (1648), and Edmund Waller's "Song (Go, Lovely Rose!)" (1645). Lucretius was a proponent of Epicurean philosophy, which underlies the Horatian motto, "carpe diem"; TSE quotes his descriptions of eager lovers and their mutually inflicted pain in the 1920 "Dante" (227-28). The amorous lyrics addressed to Lesbia by Catullus – which TSE read in Francis Simpson's Latin edition of the *Select Poems of Catullus* (1892) – were early examples of the "carpe diem" model and were widely translated in the seventeenth century.

13. TSE adapts this passage twice in part III of *The Waste Land*: "But at my back in a cold blast I hear / The rattle of the bones, and chuckle spread from ear to ear" (ll. 185-86) and "But at my back from time to time I hear / The sound of horns and motors" (ll. 196-97).

14†. In *TLS*, *Tributes*, and *HJD*: "Mors æqua pulsat"

15†. In *TLS* and *Tributes*, TSE included two additional verses from Horace: "Eheu fugaces, Postume, Postume, / Labuntur anni . . ." ["Alas, my Posthumus, my Posthumus, the fleeting years glide on"] from *Odes* II.xiv.1-2, trans. Smart (117); and "Post equitem sedet atra Cura" ["gloomy Care . . . mounts behind the horseman"] from *Odes* III.i.40, trans. Smart (139). In *HJD*, *pauperumb* was incorrectly substituted for *pauperum*.

Trans: "Pale Death knocks at the cottages of the poor and the palaces of kings with an impartial pace." Horace, *Odes* I.iv.13-14. TSE marked this passage in his copy, *The Works of Horace*, trans. Christopher Smart (Philadelphia: McKay, [1896]) (Houghton); Smart's translation is used here and below.

16. Catullus, V.5-6. *Trans*: "But for us, once our little day has reached its setting, waits a sheer night of sleep, never to be broken." TSE used the Latin edition, *Select Poems of Catullus*, ed. Francis Simpson (London: Macmillan, 1879); this translation appears in the endnotes (75).

17†. In *TLS* and *Tributes*: "than any of those quoted from Horace."

18. Cf. "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock": "Would it have been worth while, / . . . / To have squeezed the universe into a ball" (*CPP* 6).

19. Abraham Cowley (1618-67) and John Cleveland (1613-58); in the Clark Lectures, TSE criticized in particular Cowley's *The Mistress* and Cleveland's "To Julia to Expedite her Promise" (727; 717).

20. *Trans*: The skeleton was invisible / In the happy days of pagan art. From Gautier's "Bûchers et Tombeaux" [Pyres and Tombs], *Émaux et Camées*. TSE quoted these lines in "The Post-Georgians" as well (17).

21†. In *TLS*, *Tributes*, *HJD*, and *SE* (1932): "Cannot we deceive the eyes / Of a few poor household spies? / 'Tis no sin love's fruits to steal, / But that sweet sin to reveal, / To be taken,

to be seen, / These have sins accounted been." First corrected as it appears presently in *SE* (1951).

The end of Jonson's "Song (Come, my Celia, let us prove)," a lyric from *Volpone* III.vii.165-83, which begins as an imitation of Catullus V; *read*: "reveal: / To be taken"; TSE omits the third and fourth lines of the excerpt: "Or his easier ears beguile, / Thus removèd by our wile?"

22. *Trans*: "Thus everything has come to pieces in their hands." Trans. T. W. Earp and G. W. Stonier (New York: New Directions, 1954), 347. In his notes for the conclusion of the unfinished *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, Flaubert describes the culmination of his protagonists' repeatedly failed plans for intellectual stimulation; at last, he concludes, "Ils n'ont plus aucun intérêt dans la vie" ["They no longer have any interest in life"].

23. Marvell, "Upon Appleton House, to my Lord Fairfax" (1681), ll. 49-52. In *SE* "laden" was misprinted "leaden"; it had appeared accurately in all previous versions.

24. In his edition of Johnson's *Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets*, TSE marked several of the excerpts from Donne and Cowley that Johnson adduces to demonstrate the confusion and absurdity of metaphysical conceits.

25. Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, XIV.

26. Sequentially, "Upon Appleton House," ll. 388-90; 626-28; "Bermudas," ll. 17-18; "The Garden," ll. 47-48; "The Nymph Complaining for the Death of her Faun," ll. 91-92. In referring to the latter as "The Nymph and the Fawn," TSE follows the practice of G. A. Aitken, editor of the Muses Library edition, in which the abbreviated title is used as page headings.

27. *The Life and Death of Jason* (1895), IV.577-81.

28. *The Life and Death of Jason*, IV.602-08.

29. TSE gives several examples of such emotions and their "concrete presentation" in the *Paradiso* in the 1920 essay "Dante" (232).

30†. In *TLS* and *Tributes*: "Marvell's 'Nymph and Fawn' "

31. "Clorinda and Damon," ll. 13-16.

32†. In *Tributes* "le loup du bois"

Trans: "Necessity makes men vicious; and drives them forth to rapine, as hunger drives wolves from the wood"; *read*: loups; François Villon, *Le Grand Testament*, XXI. *The Poems*, trans. H. DeVere Stacpoole (New York: John Lane, 1914), 125.

33. TSE may refer to "The Philosophy of Composition" (1846), in which Poe emphasizes the necessity of poetry's excitement: "a poem is such, only inasmuch as it intensely excites, by elevating, the soul." *Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, vol VI, ed. Edmund Clarence Stedman (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914), 40. TSE refers again to "the quality of surprise which Poe declares to be essential to poetry" in the 1929 essay "Dante" (*SE* 247). Additionally, in his copy of Johnson's "Life of Cowley," from which he draws elsewhere in this essay, TSE marked the following passage: "The pleasures of the mind imply something sudden and unexpected; that which elevates must always surprise" (29).

34†. In *TLS*, *Tributes*, and *HJD*: "anything so pure as Marvell's 'Horatian Ode'; but this ode has"

35. Dryden, *Absalom and Achitophel*, II.476-77 and I.529-30.

36. Milton, *Samson Agonistes*, ll. 1749-54.

37†. In *TLS*, *Tributes*, and *HJD*: " brilliant but ridiculous contortions"

38. "An Horatian Ode," ll. 29-36, 105-08.

39†. In *TLS* and *Tributes*: "It is what makes Marvell, in the best sense, a classic: classic in a sense in which"

40. Cowley, "Ode. Of Wit," ll. 6-8. In his copy of the *Lives*, TSE marked Johnson's suggestion that "The Ode on Wit is almost without a rival. It was about the time of Cowley that wit . . . took the meaning, whatever it be, which it now bears" (18).

41. Shelley, "To the Moon" (1824), ll. 1-6.

42†. In *TLS*, *Tributes*, and *HJD*: "poets who are afraid of acquiring wit"

43. *Trans*: It was a beautiful soul, such as is no longer made in London. TSE modifies a line from the last stanza of Laforgue's "Complainte du pauvre jeune homme" (1885): "Ils virent qu' c'était un' belle âme, / Comme on n'en fait plus aujourd'hui!" [They saw it was a beautiful soul, such as is no longer made today] *Poésies Complètes*, ed. Edouard Dujardin (Paris: Léon Vanier, 1894), 116.

Prose and Verse[1]

The Chapbook, 22 (Apr 1921) 3-10

On the subject of prose-poetry I have no theory to expound; but as I find I cannot state my position merely by denying the existence of the subject-matter, I may be excused for explaining it at greater length than a simple denial requires. I have found it convenient to put my remarks in the form of disconnected paragraphs. The present condition of English literature is so lifeless that there surely needs no extenuation of any research into past or possible forms of speech; the chief benefit of such a symposium as the present is not the verdict but the enquiry: an enquiry which might help to stimulate the worn nerves and release the arthritic limbs of our diction.

The Definition. – I have not yet been given any definition of the prose poem, which appears to be more than a tautology or a contradiction. Mr. Aldington, for example, has provided me with the following: "The prose poem is poetic content expressed in prose form."[2] Poetic content must be either the sort of thing that *is usually*, or the sort of thing that *ought to be*, expressed in verse. But if you say the latter, the prose poem is ruled out; if you say the former, you have said only that certain things can be said in either prose or verse, or that anything can be said either in prose or verse. I am not disposed to contest either of these conclusions, as they stand, but they do not appear to bring us any nearer to a definition of the prose poem. I do not assume the identification of poetry with verse; good poetry is obviously something else besides good verse; and good verse may be very indifferent poetry. I quite appreciate the meaning of anyone who says that passages of Sir Thomas Browne are "poetry," or that Denham's "Cooper's Hill" is not poetry.[3] Also, the former may be good prose, and the latter is certainly good verse; and Sir Thomas is justified for writing in prose, and Sir John Denham for writing in verse. Mr. Aldington would say that there are two kinds of prose – that of Voltaire or Gibbon, on the one hand, and that of *Gaspard de la Nuit* or *Suspiria de Profundis* on the other.[4] Perhaps he will admit, what seems to me equally likely, that there are two kinds of verse: we may contrast Poe and Dryden, Baudelaire and Boileau. He might fairly say that we need a fourth term: we have the term "verse" and the term "poetry," and only the one term "prose" to express their opposites. The

distinction between "verse" and "prose" is clear; the distinction between "poetry" and "prose" is very obscure. I do not wish to quibble over "content"; I know that it is not a question of "subject-matter" so much as of the way in which this subject-matter is treated, apart from its expression in metrical form.

The Value of Verse and Prose. – I take it for granted that prose is allowed to be, potentially or actually, as important a medium as verse, and that it may cost quite as much pains to write. Also that any enjoyment that can be communicated by verse may be communicated by prose, with the exception of the pleasure of metrical form. And there is an equivalent pleasure in the movement of the finest prose, which is peculiar to prose and cannot be compensated by verse. It may, for all that we have yet decided, be proper to call this prose poetry; but if we deny that *all* of the best prose is poetry, we have got no farther; and we have still to find two qualities or sets of qualities, and divide the best literature, verse and prose, into two parts which shall exemplify these two qualities. Each group of works of literature will comprehend both verse and prose.

Intensity. – This is sometimes held, implicitly or explicitly, to be a character of poetry and not of prose. It must not be confused with concentration, which is stating or implying much in proportion to the space occupied, or with length, which is a different matter from either. The feeling communicated by a long piece of prose may be more intense than that of a short poem: Newman's Apology is thus more intense than a poem of Anacreon, but this intensity of feeling cannot be extracted from select passages; you must read the whole book to get it.[5] I should not care to deny intensity to Gibbon's History;[6] but this intensity is slowly cumulative, and required seven volumes for its communication.

Length. – While the preceding paragraph has pointed to what I believe a valid and useful qualification, it has also come near to juggling with the term. No long work can maintain the same high tension throughout, and although Gibbon's History, or Newman's Apology, leave a single intense feeling behind, they have in their progress a movement of tension and relaxation. This leads us to Poe's law: that no poem should be more than 100 lines.[7] Poe demands the static poem; that in which there shall be no movement of tension and relaxation, only the capture of a single unit of intense feeling. We are, most of us, inclined to agree with him: we do not like long poems. This dislike is due, I believe, partly to the taste of the day, which will pass, and partly to the abuse of the long poem in the hands of

distinguished persons who did not know how to employ it. No one who is willing to take some trouble about his pleasures complains of the *length* of the *Divine Comedy*, the *Odyssey*, or even the *Aeneid*. Any long poem will contain certain matter of ephemeral interest, like some of Dante's divine processions, but this does not imply that the long poem should not have been written – that, in other words, it should have been composed as a number of short poems. The poems I have just mentioned have, in different degrees, the movement toward and from intensity which is life itself. Milton and Wordsworth, on the other hand, lack this unity, and therefore lack life; and the general criticism on most of the long poems of the nineteenth century is simply that they are not good enough.

Verse and Prose Again. – It might be suggested that the proper form would be one which combined verse and prose in waves of intense or relaxed feeling. We have not, however, committed ourselves to the statement that intensity of feeling should be expressed in verse, or that verse should always be intense. And such a mixture of prose and verse would sin against a different kind of unity. A single work must have some metrical unity. This may vary widely in practice: I see no reason why a considerable variety of verse forms may not be employed within the limits of a single poem; or why a prose writer should not vary his cadences almost indefinitely; that is a question for discretion, taste and genius to settle. We seem to see clearly enough that prose is allowed to be "poetic"; we appear to have overlooked the right of poetry to be "prosaic." On the other hand, if we admit the long poem, we surely ought to admit the short "prose" (we cannot speak conveniently in English, as we can in French, of "Proses" in the plural). And the short prose is, I believe, what most people have in mind when they speak of "poems in prose." (But shortness is evidently not a sufficient characterisation, else we should have to denominate the writings of Mr. Pearsall Smith as "poems" in prose.)[8]

Another Sense of "Poetic" and "Prosaic." – I have spoken only of verse in which there is a more or less periodic movement between intensity and relaxation, but there is another kind of verse which is disparaged. Is *Absalom and Achitophel*, is the Letter to Arbuthnot, poetry?[9] These are great literature; and I cannot see that it matters much whether we call them poetry or prose. In any case, they do something that great poetry does: they capture and put into literature an emotion: we may say, in Dryden's case, the emotion of contempt, and in Pope's case, the emotion of hatred or spite. In this sort of verse also there is movement between greater and less intensity.

One Kind of "Poetic" Prose. – A number of prose works, especially several of the seventeenth century, are spoken of as "poetic." Namely, the writings of Sir Thomas Browne and Jeremy Taylor.[10] We agree with Remy de Gourmont's assertion that it is only the style that preserves literature; but we must emphasise the "preservation," and ask what is preserved.[11] Possibly by some prejudice or narrowness of taste, I have always held these writers to be of a mediocrity of mind which forbade my taking any keen pleasure in their style. I find them diffuse, and precisely lacking in that intensity which raises the history of Newman's religious doubts to the highest importance even for the otherwise alien reader. But let us examine a passage of one of these authors, which is not unjustly celebrated as a piece of poetic prose:

> Now since these dead bones have already out-lasted the living ones of Methuselah, and in a yard underground, and thin walls of clay, out-worn all the strong and specious buildings above it; and quietly rested under the drums and tramplings of three conquests: what prince can promise such diuturnity unto his relics, or might not gladly say, "*Sic ego componi versus in ossa velim*"? Time, which antiquates antiquities, and hath an art to make dust of all things, hath yet spared these minor monuments.[12]

I recognise the beauty of the cadence, the felicity and Latin sonority of the phrase; and I am hard put to it to justify my affirmation that the substance of this passage is but a pinch of dust, and therefore there is not really great style. Even if it be "poetry," it is not great poetry like such sepulchral things as the Grave Digger Scene in *Hamlet* (which is prose, besides), or certain poems of Donne, or Bishop King's "Exequy" for his dead wife.[13] I believe that in each of these a human emotion is concentrated and fixed, and that in the prose of Sir Thomas Browne only a commonplace sententiousness is decorated by reverberating language.

We have to face the puzzling fact that in English literature there are a number of writers – Milton, Tennyson, Sir Thomas Browne, and others – whose style, far from "preserving" the content, appears to survive and to seduce quite apart from the content. It is "style" in this restricted sense, that it is not the incorporation of any interesting personality; it is the sort of style which is a dangerous temptation to any student who is anxious to write good English. It is language dissociated from things, assuming an independent existence. And unless Milton and Tennyson are the authors of the most "poetical" verse in English, how can we say that Sir Thomas Browne's is the most "poetical" prose?

The conclusion is, that we shall not find the prose poem in the "purple patch." Launcelot Andrewes is, I think, a great prose writer, but you cannot really get at the poetry in his prose unless you are willing to read at least one of his sermons entire; his style preserves the content, yes, but you cannot get the pleasure of the style unless you interest yourself in something more than the words. Donne also is a great prose writer, but even the passages which Mr. Pearsall Smith has judiciously selected remain only selections.[14] There is no question of separating wheat and chaff, digging jewels out of mud; they serve as a sample, a taste.

If there is such a thing as prose poetry it is not a poetry of verbal beauty merely. "Verbal beauty" is probably never, in literature, a beauty of *pure* sound; I doubt whether there is a beauty of pure sound. What Pater tries to do in prose is much like what Swinburne often does in verse: to arouse indefinite evocation, depending as much upon literary association as upon the beauty of the rhythm. "This is the head upon which all the ends of the world have come, and the eyelids are a little weary."[15] Compare this whole passage about La Gioconda with the last chapter of Ecclesiastes, and see the difference between direct suggestiveness by precise reference, and the meretricious suggestiveness of vague literary association.[16] There is more essential poetry in Turgenev's *Sportsman's Sketches*, even in translation, than in the whole of Sir Thomas Browne or Walter Pater.[17]

De Quincey and Poe. – Here are two prose writers who seem to me to deserve a very different distinction. They were both men of very great intellectual power, of much greater intelligence than Browne, or Pater, or even Ruskin. What is remarkable is their range: in other words, their courage and adventurousness in tackling anything that had to be expressed. The difference between De Quincey's "Dream Fugue" and Browne's *Urn Burial* is that De Quincey aims to express a content of some intensity, and that he is not diverted into verbal suggestiveness.[18]

"If, as a musician, as the leader of a mighty orchestra," he said to Lamb, "you had this theme offered to you – 'Belshazzar the King gave a great feast to a thousand of his lords,' – or this, 'And on a certain day Marcus Cicero stood up, and in a set speech rendered solemn thanks to Caius Caesar for Quintus Ligarius pardoned, and Marcus Marcellus restored' – surely no man would deny that, in such a case, simplicity, though in a passive sense not lawfully absent, must stand aside as totally insufficient for the *positive* part."[19]

The Image. – But the wide range of subject and treatment of Poe and De Quincey makes it difficult to draw any line between what is prose, in their writings, and what is "prose poetry." I suppose that the "Murders in the Rue Morgue" would be called prose, "Shadow" prose poetry, and "The Assignation" perhaps something between the two.[20] This suggests the suspicion that the distinction between prose and poetry upon which the term "prose poetry" is based, is probably the old assertion that poetry is the language of emotion and imagination – proceeding by concrete images – and that prose is the language of thought and ratiocination – proceeding by argument, by definition, by inference, by the use of abstract terms.

Logic and Imagination. – It proves impossible, however, to draw any line between thinking and feeling, or between those works the chief aim or effect of which is aesthetic pleasure, and those which give aesthetic pleasure in the production of some other effect. The work of poetry is often said to be performed by the use of images; by a cumulative succession of images each fusing with the next; or by the rapid and unexpected combination of images apparently unrelated, which have their relationship enforced upon them by the mind of the author. This appears to be true, but it does not follow that there are two distinct faculties, one of imagination and one of reason, one of poetry and one of prose, or that "feeling," in a work of art, is any less an intellectual product than is "thought."

To attempt to construct a theory with the terms I have been using would be a futile building with straw; my remarks are only valid, if valid they be, so far as they are destructive of false distinctions. I object to the term "prose-poetry" because it seems to imply a sharp distinction between "poetry" and "prose" which I do not admit, and if it does not imply this distinction, the term is meaningless and otiose, as there can be no combination of what is not distinguished. If the writing of prose can be an art just as the writing of verse can be an art, we do not seem to require any other admission. Versification, in any of the systems known to European and other cultures, brings in something which is not present in prose, because it is from any other point of view than that of art, a superfluity, a definite concession to the desire for "play." But we must remember, on the one hand, that verse is always struggling, while remaining verse, to take up to itself more and more of what is prose, to take something more from life and turn it into "play." Seen from this angle, the labour of Mallarmé with the French language becomes something very important; every battle he

fought with syntax represents the effort to transmute lead into gold, ordinary language into poetry;[21] and the real failure of the mass of contemporary verse is its failure to draw anything new from life into art. And, on the other hand, prose, not being cut off by the barrier of verse which must at the same time be affirmed and diminished, can transmute life in its own way by raising it to the condition of "play," precisely because it is not verse.

The real decadence in literature occurs when both verse and prose cease their effort: Alexandrianism, or more truly Georgianism, is present when verse becomes a language, a set of feelings, a style quite remote from life, and when prose becomes a mere practical vehicle.[22] The attempt to impart motion to this lifeless condition may result in such writing as is now pretty current in America: verse which is simply *prosaic,* and prose which is simply *artificial*, and verse again which mimics the artificiality of the artificial prose.

Practical Conclusion. – We must be very tolerant of any attempt in verse that appears to trespass upon prose, or of any attempt in prose that appears to strive toward the condition of "poetry." And there is no reason why prose should be confined to any of the recognised forms, the Novel, the Essay, or whatever else there may be in English. I have heard Mr. James Joyce's "Ulysses" condemned on the ground that it is "poetry" and therefore should have been written in verse; whereas it seems to me to be the most vital development of prose that has taken place in this generation.[23] I only wish to take the precaution of looking upon the Monna Lisas of prose, the drums and tramplings of three conquests, the eloquent just and mightie deaths, with a suspicious and interrogating eye, and making quite certain what, if any, solid and genuine bit of life they have pounced upon and raised to the dignity of poetry.[24]

NOTES

1. Published in a special issue titled "Poetry in Prose: Three Essays," which also included "Poetry in Prose" by Frederic Manning (10-15) and "A Note on Poetry in Prose" by Richard Aldington (16-24). Aldington proposed the special issue to *Chapbook* editor Harold Monro on 24 Oct 1920: "What I thought of making is an enquiry into the nature of prose poetry, with 'divers illustrations,' and a discussion of its value or otherwise. . . . Perhaps you could get Eliot and Manning to write something on the same subject. Eliot's views I know; he is rather against prose poetry for highly respectable & subtle reasons." *Richard Aldington: An Autobiography in Letters*, 63.

2. Aldington relates their exchange in "A Note on Poetry in Prose" in the present issue: "Mr. Eliot asked me for a definition of 'poetry in prose' and I replied, under protest, 'poetic content

in a prose form.' It was not hard to dissolve that hasty phrase into nothing; nevertheless a man of goodwill can see what is meant if he will accept it merely as an attempt to sum up in a phrase something which can only be adequately defined in a book" (19).

3. Denham, *Cooper's Hill* (1642).

4. TSE called the ornate style of Voltaire and Gibbon "the desiccation in the classic prose of both languages" in "The Local Flavour" (177). Louis ("Aloysius") Bertrand's *Gaspard de la nuit: Fantaisies à la manière de Rembrandt et de Callot* [Gaspard of the Night: Fantasies in the Manner of Rembrandt and Callot] (1842) and Thomas De Quincey's *Suspiria de Profundis* (1845; 1853) are two of the earliest collections of prose poems.

5. Newman's Apology: *Apologia pro Vita Sua* (1864). TSE referred to passages in the *Apologia* as exemplary of "poetic" prose in "The Borderline of Prose" (1.540). Richard Aldington's translations of the poems by Alexandrian imitators of the Greek lyric poet Anacreon (ca. 570-488 BC) had recently appeared as *Greek Songs in the Manner of Anacreon* (1919), the first volume in "The Poets' Translation Series, Second Set."

6. Gibbon's History: *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-89).

7. In "The Philosophy of Composition" (1846), Poe writes: "If any literary work is too long to be read at one sitting, we must be content to dispense with the immensely important effect derivable from unity of impression. . . . I conceived the proper *length* for my intended poem – a length of about one hundred lines." *Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, vol VI, ed. Edmund Clarence Stedman (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914), 39, 41.

8. Logan Pearsall Smith's epigrammatic prose appeared regularly in the *London Mercury* and was collected in volumes such as *Trivia* (1902) and *More Trivia* (1921).

9. Dryden, *Absalom and Achitophel* (1681). Letter to Arbuthnot: Pope, *An Epistle from Mr. Pope, to Dr. Arbuthnot* (1735).

10. For instance, William Crawshaw in *The Making of English Literature*: "Browne was a man of remarkable learning . . . he had, like Jeremy Taylor, that combination of poetic imagination and verbal melody of which only the greatest masters of prose style are capable" (Boston: Heath, 1907), 158. Crawshaw includes the passage from Browne's *Hydriotaphia* that TSE quotes at the end of this paragraph.

11. In *Le Problème du style*, Gourmont writes: "le style est aussi une force, mais sa valeur est d'autant plus vite diminuée qu'elle s'exténue à préserver de l'anéantissement la fragilité qu'elle embrasse et qu'elle soutient" (151). [Style is also a force, but its value is that much more quickly diminished when it exhausts itself in preserving from annihilation the fragility which it embraces and sustains.] *Selected Writings*, trans. Glenn S. Burne (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1966).

12. Sir Thomas Browne, *Hydriotaphia, Urne-Buriall; or, A Brief Discourse of the Sepulchrall Urnes Lately Found in Norfolk* (1658), from the beginning of chapter V. TSE follows a frequently printed variant – as in the 1906 Everyman edition (ed. C. H. Herford, London: Dent) – in quoting "strong and spacious buildings" rather than "strong and specious buildings." Browne quotes the Latin phrase (*Sic ego componi* . . .) from Tibullus (III. ii): "Thus, when naught is left of me but bones, would I be laid to rest." Trans. J. P. Postgate (London: Heinemann, 1962), 291.

13. *Hamlet* V.i. TSE likely has in mind Donne's "The Funeral" and "The Relic," both of which he praised in "Reflections on Contemporary Poetry [I]" (1.574). Henry King (1592-1669),

Bishop of Chichester, author of "An Exequy to his Matchlesse Never to be Forgotten Friend" (1657), which TSE read in Saintsbury's *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period*, vol 3 (1921).

14. *Donne's Sermons: Selected Passages* (1919), ed. Pearsall Smith; reviewed by TSE in "The Preacher as Artist" (165).

15. From Pater's description in "Leonardo Da Vinci," *The Renaissance*, of the woman (the Monna Lisa) in Da Vinci's *La Gioconda*. *Read*: "Hers is the head upon which all 'the ends of the world are come,' and the eyelids are a little weary"; Pater quotes from I Corinthians 10:11.

16. TSE likely refers specifically to Ecclesiastes 12:5 – "also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets" – which he includes in the notes to line 23 of *TWL* and to which he alludes in section II of *Ash-Wednesday* as well.

17. TSE owned Constance Garnett's 1906 English translation, *Sportsman's Sketches* (London: Heinemann), of *Zapiski okhotnika* (1852), Turgenev's two-volume collection of short fiction. He told Eleanor Hinkley in 1918 that he admired Turgenev "especially in the *Sportsman's Sketches*. His method looks simple and slight, but he is a consummate master with it" (*L1* 259).

18. "Dream Fugue on the above theme of Sudden Death," the third part of "The English Mail-Coach, or the Glory of Motion" (1849) by Thomas De Quincey (1785-1859).

19. De Quincey relates the conversation in "Charles Lamb" (1848), which continues: "Simplicity might guide, even here, but could not furnish the power; a rudder it might be, but not an oar or a sail." *Collected Writings*, vol 5, ed. David Masson (London: A. & C. Black, 1897), 235.

20. Edgar Allan Poe's "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841), "Shadow – A Parable" (1845; originally "Shadow – A Fable," 1835), and "The Assignation" (1845; originally "The Visionary," 1834).

21. For TSE's reflections on the syntax of Stéphane Mallarmé, see "Modern Tendencies in Poetry" (217-18).

22. Alexandrianism refers to the characteristically ornate and artificial style of the Alexandrian school of Greek poets in the third and second centuries BC and its influence on later Roman poets. TSE described the remoteness of Georgian poetry and its unintelligibility "to anyone who has not substituted Georgian emotions for human ones" in "Verse Pleasant and Unpleasant" (1.679).

23. At the time of this essay, chapters of Joyce's novel had been serialized in the *Little Review* (1918-20, through the first part of episode 14, "Oxen of the Sun") and the *Egoist* (1919, through part of episode 10, "Wandering Rocks") before *Ulysses* was published on 2 Feb 1922.

24. TSE combines the phrase that he quoted above from Browne's *Hydriotaphia* ("drums and trampling") with another from Sir Walter Ralegh's *History of the World* (Book V): "O eloquent, just, and mightie Death, whom none could advise, thou hast perswaded." He may have recalled the latter from Charles Whibley's *Literary Studies* – which he reviewed in 1919 (176) – wherein Whibley quotes the line and calls Ralegh's "a prose which Donne could not surpass, and which may well have been a model to Sir Thomas Browne himself" (188).

London Letter: March, 1921[1]

The Dial, 70 (Apr 1921) 448-53

THE TWO STUPIDITIES

I take up this task of writing a London letter with an overwhelming sense of difficulty. As I first proposed it to myself, there was no difficulty at all: it was to mention any work, or any momentary appearance of intellect or feeling, which seemed to deserve mention, to use any opportunity to consider the writing of living authors whom I respect, and to construct such a portrait of the time as might be in my power. Then I reflected that there is in contemporary English literature a very great deal which I cordially detest; and that I could not make an honest portrait without calling attention to these things. Yet I recognized that by so doing I might arouse the glee, and draw upon myself the approval, of exactly that part of American opinion which I abominate. One must face the fact that the imbeciles on either side of the water are very glad and quite able to perceive, by that sort of hostile sympathy which exists only among members of the same family, the imbecilities of the great fraternity on the other side; and that this perception only confirms them in their own variety of stupidity. I can claim no great originality in diagnosing either of the two stupidities; the only possible originality is in their collocation. There is Mr. Mencken, a brilliant specialist in American depravity, whose last book I have read with strong admiration.[2] And only recently, when I mentioned, rather gently as I thought, a very conspicuous feature of English stupidity, I was gaped at by one of the smaller English reviewers, for my words of "elegant anguish."[3] It pleased me to reflect that a critic of the same stripe had once referred to Matthew Arnold as an "elegant Jeremiah";[4] although this coincidence merely proved the immortality of the English reviewer, and not any similarity between Matthew Arnold and myself. However, if these letters succeed in being written with any competence, I am almost certain to become an object of international execration; a disaster in which I pray very vigorously that *The Dial* may not share.

PROLEGOMENA TO POETRY

Mr. Harold Monro has just produced a book entitled *Some Contemporary Poets*: *1920*, which is a particularly useful book for my horrid purpose.[5] It is, I hope, no injustice to Mr. Monro to say that his book has every appearance of having been written to order. We have all written books to order, or we have conceived the desire, at times of penury, of being asked to write a book to order, and some moralists tell us that desire is as sinful as commission. But the peculiar effect of Mr. Monro's labours appears to be, that everything in contemporary poetry (1920) is reduced to a precise level of flatness. Our judgement is thus left free, if unguided. It is to be wondered what the "general reading public," to whom its publishers say it should appeal, and who can hardly be other than a small section of what Arnold called the Philistines, will make of it.[6] Some of the poets whom Mr. Monro chats about are dull, some are immature, some are slight, some are downright bad: Mr. Monro's effect is to make them all seem dull, immature, slight, and bad. And some are good, but we do not get that impression from the book.

The first suggestion which this book gives me is that what I may call the centre of gravity of dulness lies, in America and England, at different points. Nearly the whole body of the Established Church of contemporary literature in America must appear a little ridiculous, if no worse, to even the most latitudinarian *littérateurs* of Established contemporary literature in England. I cannot conceive Mr. Edmund Gosse, for example, really being taken in by the effusions of Miss Repplier or the Reverend Mr. Crothers, although I can conceive of his commending them with a kindly Olympian patronage which might take in the recipients.[7] The Polite Essay is, in fact, done rather better in England, and this truth is not reserved for a few profound minds. Nevertheless the Established Church of Literature does occasionally patronize, with the semblance of enthusiasm, American literature which happens to amuse it. It is creditable that *Spoon River* should for a time have aroused interest here; unfortunately, its success has been more lately duplicated by the poetry of Mr. Vachel Lindsay.[8] His apparent "Americanism" and vigorous freedom from shame about his simple tastes amuse the orthodox, while his Y. M. C. A. morality represents something more remote than a massacre in Armenia.[9] His verses have appeared in an English periodical. But I cannot believe that he is treated with more respect than that with which Clemenceau and Lloyd George bonified President Wilson.[10]

One must therefore reject the belief that there is any near equivalent in England for the Reverend Mr. Crothers, or Lindsay, or Mr. Mabie, or that there is any exact parallel anywhere between English life and American life (though there are constant curious resemblances when one has ceased to expect them).[11] And the standards by which one disposes of American bad writing and English bad writing will not be the same. The conventional literature of America is either wretchedly imitative of European culture, or ignorant of it, or both; and by this standard one easily expels either the Reverend Mr. Crothers, with his parish tea-party wit, his dreadful Nonconformity, or Mr. David Graham Phillips, with his exploitation of the Noble Fallen Woman who, in England, has vanished into the underworld of romance.[12] But there is no simple international comparison of cultures by which to deal so easily with, let us say, Mr. John Drinkwater.[13] I cannot point to any existing society which produces finer average specimens than Mr. Drinkwater; I can only point to a few individuals in England; and it is always open to Mr. Drinkwater's admirers to protest that my few individuals are impostors. The most obvious thing to say, the thing which makes it difficult for the critic to say more, is that the work of Mr. Drinkwater is dull, supremely dull. But when one turns to view the work of a numerous host of Drinkwaters, incipient Drinkwaters, decayed Drinkwaters, cross-bred Drinkwaters, this adjective ceases to satisfy the intelligence. Any social phenomenon of such dimensions must present more interest than that.

I do not make the mistake of supposing that Keats, or Shelley, or Wordsworth, or Tennyson can be incriminated in the production of the Georgian Anthology.[14] Good poets may usually have a bad influence, but their influence is usually much more restricted. I cannot see in the Georgian Anthology any such influence as Wordsworth, Keats, and Shelley had upon Arnold, Tennyson, and Browning. The dulness of the Georgian Anthology is original, unique; we shall find its cause in something much more profound than the influence of a few predecessors. The subtle spirit inspiring the ouija-board of Mr. J. C. Squire's patient prestidigitators is not the shattered Keats but the solid and eternal Podsnap himself.[15] This party represents, in fact, the insurgent middle class, Mr. Monro's General Reading Public. At the very moment when the middle class appears to be on the point of perdition – beleaguered by a Coalition Government, the Three Trades-Unions, and the Income Tax[16] – at this very moment it enjoys the triumph, in intellectual matters, of being able to respect no other standards

than its own. And indeed, while its citadels appear to topple, it is busy strengthening its foundations. Year by year, royal birth-day by royal birth-day, it gains more seats in the House of Lords; and on the other hand, if it rejects with contumely the independent man, the free man, all the individuals who do not conform to a world of mass-production, the Middle Class finds itself on one side more and more approaching identity with what used to be called the Lower Class. Both middle class and lower class are finding safety in Regular Hours, Regular Wages, Regular Pensions, and Regular Ideas. In other words, there will soon be only one class, and the second Flood is here.

This social evolution is not, of course, peculiarly British, and I am ready to admit that it may have more revolting forms elsewhere. I have no wish to dwell upon the subject; I only introduced it as a background to the Georgian Anthology. I do not wish either to dwell upon the dulness of this book; that the writers cannot help. What I wish to comment on is the extreme lack of culture on the part of a number of writers in prose and verse; and when I say this I hear already the repeated epithets of "elegant anguish," and "dusty face," and "*précieux ridicule*" with which my efficient clipping-bureau has lately refreshed me.[17] I am prepared to be accused, so unconscious is the humour of the multitude, of self-advertisement. But it is certain that culture does not reside solely in a university education, or in extensive reading; and it is doubtful whether culture is perceptibly developed by a busy life of journalism. A literature without any critical sense; a poetry which takes not the faintest notice of the development of French verse from Baudelaire to the present day, and which has perused English literature with only a wandering antiquarian passion, a taste for which everything is either too hot or too cold; there is no culture here. Culture is traditional, and loves novelty; the General Reading Public knows no tradition, and loves staleness. And it must not be supposed that this great middle class public which consumes Georgian poetry corresponds to the public of Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox.[18] I intend no disrespect to that lady, whose verse I have read with ease and some pleasure. The Georgian public is a smallish but important public, it is that offensive part of the middle class which believes itself superior to the rest of the middle class; and superior for precisely this reason that it believes itself to possess culture.

Returning to Mr. Monro's book, we find a number of poets, a very small number, who cannot simply be described as purveyors to the General

Reading Public. There is Mr. Nichols who is too nimble to be dull, and who is very immature; if he could free himself from the circumambient vulgarity and in several ways forget himself, he might rise to a superior place.[19] Then there is the curious spectacle of Mr. Huxley, one of the very few who have experienced the influence of Laforgue, and who writes (I believe it is no secret) one of the brightest pages in the *Athenaeum*; before he has thoroughly worked out Laforgue into a perfect language of his own, skews off into Leda, which, although the work of a much more sophisticated temperament than Mr. Squire's, is really a concession to the creamy top of the General Reading Public.[20] There is Miss Sitwell.[21] She is tediously given to repeating herself, but this repetition is perhaps her consciousness of the fact that she has a genuine little vision of the age, quite her own. This peculiar way of seeing things, which is not capable of much development, is what is interesting; not her technique, which is insufficient. And individually, there are poems by Mr. Herbert Read and Mr. Aldington which endure. But what is good (on looking over for the last time Mr. Monro's list of names) is very scattered, and the bad poetry is very compact. I have avoided mentioning the Elder Poets, such as Mr. Bridges, or Mr. Yeats, or Mr. Pound.[22] One becomes old very quickly in these days.

What I propose to myself, in continuation of this tentative essay, is to compare the use of the English language in contemporary English and American verse, a comparison which will probably show a balance in favour of London (or Dublin); and further to institute a comparison of English and American verse with French. There are pitfalls too in the question of the Revival of Criticism in England; I should rightly have discussed the revival of criticism in this letter, as it may be dead before I write again.[23] Again, the Palladium has at this moment an excellent bill, including Marie Lloyd, Little Tich, George Mozart, and Ernie Lotinga; and that provokes an important chapter on the Extinction of the Music Hall, the corruption of the Theatre Public, and the incapacity of the British public to appreciate Miss Ethel Levey.[24] Next week the admirable Phoenix Society will perform *Volpone or the Fox* and this requires a word on Shakesperian acting in England.[25] All of these problems are integral to my plan, and I hope can be included before the next visit of M. Diaghileff's Ballet.[26] A small but varied exhibition by Picasso is the most interesting event of London at this moment – but that lies outside of my province.[27]

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Composed late in Jan 1921, this is the first of TSE's eight semi-regular "London Letters" for the *Dial* during 1921-22, each bearing the date below the title. He had written to editor Scofield Thayer three years earlier to propose a series that would "exploit my geographical position . . . Studies in European Literature, by one on the SPOT!" (*L1* 269). On 17 Oct 1920, TSE formally agreed to a bimonthly contribution "dealing with the literary life of the metropolis. I suppose it will turn out to be mostly an attempt to diagnose the reasons for there not being more life than there is; but I will endeavour to spot any germs of vitality that appear" (*L1* 509). When he sent the present essay to Thayer on 30 Jan 1921, he admitted that "it is the first writing of any kind that I have done for six months; and therefore it came very hard. I rewrote it twice" (*L1* 539).

2. American humorist and editor H. L. Mencken (1880-1956) had recently published *Prejudices: Second Series* (1920) and *The American Credo: A Contribution toward the Interpretation of the National Mind* (1920), both comic invectives against American culture and conventions.

3. untraced.

4. Arnold recalls the epithet – originally used by journalist James Macdonell, writing anonymously in the *Daily Telegraph* (8 Sept 1866) – in the introduction to *Culture and Anarchy* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1869): "I have been taken to task by the *Daily Telegraph* . . . and called 'an elegant Jeremiah'" (3).

5. *Some Contemporary Poets (1920)* (London: L. Parsons, 1920). Pp. 224. Harold Monro was owner of the Poetry Bookshop in Bloomsbury, where he would soon offer a number of signed copies of TSE's second volume of verse, *Ara Vos Prec*. TSE had written a positive review of his *Strange Meetings* in 1917 and had recently contributed to *The Chapbook*, which Monro edited (1.573; 2.324).

6. From the advertising section at the back of the book: "The book should be of service to students . . . and should also serve as a technical guide to the general reading public." In "Heinrich Heine" (1863), Arnold argues for the contemporary value of the term "Philistine," which "must have originally meant . . . a strong, dogged, unenlightened opponent of the chosen people." *Essays Literary and Critical*, 107. He defines the term again ("the enemy of the children of the light, or servants of the idea") and uses it synonymously with the "middle class" in *Culture and Anarchy*, 98-99.

7. Popular American essayists Agnes Repplier (1855-1950) and Samuel McChord Crothers (1857-1927), also a Unitarian minister.

8. TSE considered the series of fictional verse narratives set in small-town America in Edgar Lee Masters's *The Spoon River Anthology* (1915) lacking in intensity: "its author is a moralist, rather than an observer" (1.515). He was "appalled" by Vachel Lindsay's "The Broncho that Would Not Be Broken," set in South Bend, Kansas, when it appeared in Harold Monro's *The Chapbook* in May 1920 (*L1* 503).

9. TSE likens Lindsay's American parochialism and overt moralizing to the popular, nonsectarian morality of the Young Men's Christian Association (Y.M.C.A). Reports of new and ongoing massacres of the Armenian population in the Ottoman Empire – a systematic slaughter overseen by the Turkish government during and after World War I – continued to appear periodically in the *Times* throughout 1920 and 1921.

10. TSE had admired American President Woodrow Wilson but believed that he had been manipulated at the Paris Peace Conference after World War I, where French prime minister Georges Benjamin Clemenceau (1841-1929) and British prime minister David Lloyd George (1863-1945) controlled the debate: "Wilson went down utterly before European diplomacy," he wrote afterward (*L1* 404).

11. American essayist and lecturer Hamilton Wright Mabie (1845-1916), associate editor of *The Outlook* (New York).

12. Crothers, a pastor at the First Unitarian Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts, published conversational essays in the *Atlantic Monthly* and elsewhere. American novelist David Graham Phillips (1867-1911) wrote often about strong-willed yet ill-fated women such as the protagonist of *Susan Lenox: Her Fall and Rise* (1917).

13. In *Some Contemporary Poets*, Monro condemns Georgian poet John Drinkwater for his "obsolete and *cliché-ridden* language, full of unnatural or borrowed phrases" (181).

14. The latest edition of the regular "Georgian Anthology," *Georgian Poetry*: *1918-1919,* was published by Monro's Poetry Bookshop in 1919. TSE had reviewed the previous volume, *Georgian Poetry*, *1916-1917,* in "Verse Pleasant and Unpleasant" (1.679), and in "Observations" he wrote: "Keats, Shelley, and Wordsworth punish us from their graves with the annual scourge of the Georgian Anthology" (1.711).

15. J. C. Squire, editor of the *London Mercury*, was a steadfast champion of the Georgian poets and himself a contributor to *Georgian Poetry*. Mr. Podsnap is a wealthy, smug English gentleman in Charles Dickens's *Our Mutual Friend*; TSE regarded him as a part of the "degenerate" modern mythology of the Englishman (302).

16. The perceived threats to conservative middle-class wealth, including the coalition government under Prime Minister Lloyd George, a former Liberal cabinet member who had won conservative support in 1916; the increasing influence of the National Union of Mineworkers, the National Union of Railwaymen, and the National Transport Workers' Federation, which joined forces in 1914; and escalating income taxes levied on higher incomes. Prompted by mention of the imminent disruptions created by the coal miners' strike, TSE wrote to Richard Aldington on 7 Apr 1921: "Having only contempt for every existing political party, and profound hatred for democracy, I feel the blackest gloom. Whatever happens will be another step towards the destruction of 'Europe.' The whole of contemporary politics oppresses me with a continuous physical horror" (*L1* 550).

17. *précieux ridicule*: ridiculous precious man. An adaptation of the title of Molière's *Les Précieuses ridicules*. In his review of *SW* for the *Nation* (4 Dec 1920), Robert Lynd wrote that several of TSE's comments betray "an attitude which is intolerable in a critic of literature, and should be left to the *précieuses ridicules*" (*Contemporary Reviews* 58). "Dusty face": untraced.

18. Popular American poet Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850-1919), author of *Poems of Passion* (1883), was described in the *Times* obituary (31 Oct) as "the most popular poet of either sex and of any age, read by thousands who never open Shakespeare" (15).

19. Poet and novelist Robert Nichols corresponded with TSE briefly in Aug 1917, when TSE told him: "I sincerely hope when you are next in London you will not find it too much trouble to look me up" (*L1* 212). Monro writes that Nichols "has made certain poems so promising that one may hope that he will outgrow his derivativeness and his megalomaniac poses" (172).

20. Monro places Aldous Huxley "among the most promising" of younger poets (128); recognizes his debt to French literature; and praises his "Leda," which TSE had applauded in his 1919 review of *Coterie*, where it first appeared (130). Under the pseudonym "Autolycus," Huxley contributed a regular column titled "Marginalia" to the *Athenaeum* from Feb 1920 to Feb 1921.

21. TSE reviewed *Wheels: A Second Cycle and Wheels, Third Cycle*, both edited and contributed to by Edith Sitwell, in "Verse Pleasant and Unpleasant" and "The Post-Georgians" (1.679; 2.16).

22. Monro praises poet laureate Robert Bridges (1844-1930), who he says "has restored much dignity to the office" (35).

23. untraced.

24. The Palladium, a three-tiered music hall with seating for more than 2,000, had been featuring variety performances by Marie Lloyd, Ernie Lotinga (1876-1951), and others since 29 Dec 1920; vaudeville singer Ethel Levey (Ethelia Fowler, 1880-1955) was not among them.

25. The independent London theatre group The Phoenix Society gave performances of Jonson's *Volpone* on 30 Jan and 1 Feb 1921; TSE attended the production and praised it in his next "London Letter" (341).

26. TSE's next "London Letter" (June 1921) was finished before the Ballets Russes, run by manager and impresario Sergei Pavlovich Diaghilev (1872-1929), returned to London for its third postwar season, beginning 26 May. TSE discussed the performances, instead, in his "London Letters" of July (362) and Sept 1921 (369).

27. Held at the Leicester Galleries throughout Jan 1921, "Works by Pablo Picasso" featured twenty-four oil paintings and forty-eight drawings, watercolors, and etchings completed between 1902 and 1919.

London Letter: May, 1921[1]

The Dial, 70 (June 1921) 686-91

THE PHOENIX SOCIETY

In my last letter I mentioned an approaching performance by the Phoenix Society of Ben Jonson's *Volpone*; the performance proved to be the most important theatrical event of the year in London.[2] The play was superbly carried out; the performance gave evidence of Jonson's consummate skill in stage technique, proceeding without a moment of tedium from end to end; it was well acted and both acted and received with great appreciation.

Almost the only opportunity for seeing a good play is that given by a few private societies, which by reason of their "private" character are allowed to give performances (for subscribers) on Sunday evenings. These are not commercial enterprises, but depend upon the enthusiasm of a few patrons and the devotion of a few actors, most of whom have other engagements during the week. The Phoenix, which restricts itself to Elizabethan and Restoration drama, is an off-shoot of the Incorporated Stage Society, which produces modern and contemporary plays of the better sort – the better sort usually being translations.[3] At the beginning of its venture, last year, the Phoenix was obliged to suffer a good deal of abuse in the daily press, especially from the *Daily News* and the *Star*. These two journals are, to my mind, the least objectionable of the London newspapers in their political views, but their Manchester-School politics gives a strong aroma of the Ebenezer Temperance Association to their views on art.[4] The bloodiness of Elizabethan tragedy, and the practice of the Society in presenting the complete text of the plays, were the points of attack. The *Daily News* reviewed the performance of *The Duchess of Malfi* under the heading, Funnier than Farce![5] Mr. William Archer mumbled "this farrago of horrors . . . shambling and ill-composed . . . funereal affectation . . . I am far from calling the Duchess of Malfi garbage, but . . . ."[6] Still droller was a certain Sir Leo Money: "I agree with Mr. Robert Lynd that 'there are perhaps, a dozen Elizabethan plays apart from Shakespeare's that are as great as his third-best work,' but I should not include the 'Duchess of Malfi' in the dozen. . . . I did

not see the Phoenix production, but I hope that some fumigation took place." Sir Leo writes frequently about the Tariff, the income tax, and kindred topics.[7] For my part, I am more and more convinced that the Phoenix is wholly justified in its refusal to admit any expurgation whatever. The sense of relief, in hearing the indecencies of Elizabethan and Restoration drama, leaves one a better and a stronger man.

I do not suggest that Jonson is comparable to Shakespeare. But we do not know Shakespeare; we only know Sir J. Forbes-Robertson's Hamlet, and Irving's Shylock, and so on.[8] The performance of *Volpone* had a significance for us which no contemporary performance of Shakespeare has had; it brought the great English drama to life as no contemporary performance of Shakespeare has done. Shakespeare (that is to say, such of his plays as are produced at all) strained through the nineteenth century, has been dwarfed to the dimensions of a part for Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson, Sir Frank Benson, or other histrionic nonentities: Shakespeare is the avenue to knighthood.[9] But the continued popularity of Shakespeare perhaps has this meaning, that the appetite for poetic drama, and for a peculiarly English comedy or farce, has never disappeared; and that a native popular drama, if it existed, would be nearer to Shakespeare than to Ibsen or Chekhov. It is curious that the popular desire for Shakespeare, and for the operas of Gilbert and Sullivan, should be insatiable, although no attempt is ever made to create anything similar; and that on the other hand the crudest American laughter-and-tears plays, such as *Romance* or *Peg o' My Heart*, should be constantly imported.[10] Curious, again, that with so much comic talent in England – more than any other country – no intelligent attempt has been made to use it to advantage in good comic opera or revue.

MUSIC-HALL AND REVUE

This is an age of transition between the music-hall and the revue.[11] The music-hall is older, more popular, and is sanctified by the admiration of the Nineties.[12] It has flourished most vigorously in the North; many of its most famous stars are of Lancashire origin. (Marie Lloyd, if I am not mistaken, has a bit of a Manchester accent.)[13] Lancashire wit is mordant, ferocious, and personal; the Lancashire music-hall is excessively *intime*; success depends upon the relation established by a comedian of strong personality with an audience quick to respond with approval or contempt. The fierce talent of Nellie Wallace (who also has a Lancashire accent) holds the most boisterous music-hall in complete subjection.[14] Little Tich, and George

Robey (though the latter has adapted himself in recent years to some inferior revues) belong to this type and generation.[15] The Lancashire comedian is at his best when unsupported and making a direct set, pitting himself, against a suitable audience; he is seen to best advantage at the smaller and more turbulent halls. As the smaller provincial or suburban hall disappears, supplanted by the more lucrative Cinema, this type of comedian disappears with it.

The music-hall comedian, however, can still be seen to perfection, whereas the revue comedian never is, because the revue is never good enough. Our best revue comedienne, Miss Ethel Levey, has seldom had the revue, and never the appreciation, that she deserves.[16] Her type is quite different from that of Marie Lloyd or Nellie Wallace. She is the most aloof and impersonal of personalities; indifferent, rather than contemptuous, towards the audience; her appearance and movement are of an extremely modern type of beauty. Hers is not broad farce, but a fascinating inhuman grotesquerie; she plays for herself rather than for the audience. Her art requires a setting which (in this country at least) it has never had. It is not a comedy of mirth.

An element of *bizarrerie* is present in most of the comedians whom we should designate as of the revue stage rather than the music-hall stage: in Lupino Lane, in Robert Hale and George Graves; a *bizarrerie* more mature, perhaps more cosmopolitan, than that of Little Tich.[17] But the revue itself is still lacking.

CARICATURE

Baudelaire, in his essay on le Rire (*qui vaut bien celui de Bergson*)[18] remarks of English caricature

> Pour trouver du comique féroce et très-féroce, il faut passer la Manche et visiter les royaumes brumeux du spleen . . . le signe distinctif de ce genre de comique était la violence.[19]

Perhaps the best of the English caricaturists of journalism is H. M. Bateman. He has lately held a very interesting exhibition at the Leicester Galleries.[20] It is curious to remark that some of his drawings descend to the pure and insignificant funniness without seriousness which appeals to the readers of *Punch*; while others continue the best tradition from Rowlandson and Cruikshank.[21] They have some of the old English ferocity. Bateman is, I imagine, unconscious of the two distinct strains in his

work; Mr. Wyndham Lewis, in his exhibition now on show at the same gallery, is wholly conscious and deliberate in his attempt to restore this peculiarly English caricature and to unite it with serious work in paint.[22] Mr. Lewis is the most English of English painters, a student of Hogarth and Rowlandson;[23] his fantastic imagination produces something essentially different from anything across the Channel. I have always thought his design at its greatest when it approached the border of satire and caricature; and his Tyros may be expected to breed a most interesting and energetic race.

THE STATE OF CRITICISM

The disappearance of the *Athenaeum* as an independent organ, and its gradual suffocation under the ponderous mass of the *Nation*, are greatly to be deplored.[24] It leaves the *Times Literary Supplement* and the *London Mercury* as the only literary papers. The former is a useful bibliographer; it fills, and always will fill, an important place of its own. This place it can only hold by maintaining the anonymity of its contributions; but this anonymity, and the large number of its contributors, prevent it from upholding any definite standard of criticism. Nevertheless it possesses more authority than the *Mercury*, which is homogeneous enough, but suffers from the mediocrity of the minds most consistently employed upon it. Mr. Murry, as editor of the *Athenaeum*, was genuinely studious to maintain a serious criticism.[25] With his particular tastes, as well as with his general statements, I find myself frequently at variance: the former seem to me often perverse or exaggerated, the latter tainted by some unintelligible Platonism. But there is no doubt that he had much higher standards and greater ambitions for literary journalism than any other editor in London. When he is not deceived by some aberration of enthusiasm or dislike, and when he is not deluded by philosophy, he is the only one of the accredited critics whom I can read at all. There is Mr. Clutton-Brock, whose attention is not focussed upon literature but upon a very mild type of philosophic humanitarian religion; he is like a very intelligent archdeacon.[26] There is Mr. Robert Lynd, who has successfully cultivated the typical vices of daily journalism and has risen to the top of his profession; and there is Mr. Squire, whose solemn trifling fascinates multitudes; and there are several writers, like Mr. Edmund Gosse and Sir Sidney Colvin, whom I have never read and so cannot judge.[27]

I cannot find, after this muster, that there is any ground for the rumour current in the chatty paragraphs of the newsprint several months ago, that

the younger generation has decided to revive criticism.[28] There has been a brisk business in centenaries. Keats and Marvell have just been celebrated in this way. The former has been particularly fortunate. All the approved critics, each in a different paper, blew a blast of glory enough to lay Keats' ghost for twenty years. I have never read such unanimous rubbish, and yet Keats was a poet. Possibly, after the chatty columns of the newsprint have ceased to cheer the "revival" of criticism, they will get a tip to lament its decay. Yet the "revival" of criticism as a "form" is not the essential thing; if we are intelligent enough, and really interested in the arts, both criticism and "creation" will in some form flourish.

THE TRUE CHURCH AND THE NINETEEN CHURCHES

While the poetry lovers have been subscribing to purchase for the nation the Keats house in Hampstead as a museum, the Church of England has apparently persisted in its design to sell for demolition nineteen religious edifices in the City of London.[29] Probably few American visitors, and certainly few natives, ever inspect these disconsolate fanes; but they give to the business quarter of London a beauty which its hideous banks and commercial houses have not quite defaced. Some are by Christopher Wren himself, others by his school; the least precious redeems some vulgar street, like the plain little church of All Hallows at the end of London Wall.[30] Some, like St. Michael Paternoster Royal, are of great beauty.[31] As the prosperity of London has increased, the City Churches have fallen into desuetude; for their destruction the lack of congregation is the ecclesiastical excuse, and the need of money the ecclesiastical reason. The fact that the erection of these churches was apparently paid for out of a public coal tax and their decoration probably by the parishioners, does not seem to invalidate the right of the True Church to bring them to the ground.[32] To one who, like the present writer, passes his days in this City of London (*quand'io sentii chiavar l'uscio di sotto*)[33] the loss of these towers, to meet the eye down a grimy lane, and of these empty naves, to receive the solitary visitor at noon from the dust and tumult of Lombard Street, will be irreparable and unforgotten.[34] A small pamphlet issued for the London County Council (*Proposed Demolition of Nineteen City Churches*: P. S. King & Son, Ltd., 2-4 Gt. Smith Street, Westminster, S.W.1, 3s.6d. net) should be enough to persuade of what I have said.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Composed before 21 May, when TSE wrote to editor Scofield Thayer that he was "glad to hear that my letter was received in time" (*L1* 560). This was the second of TSE's eight regular "London Letters" for the *Dial*, each bearing the date below the title.

2. The Phoenix Society performed Jonson's *Volpone* on 30 Jan and 1 Feb 1921.

3. The Incorporated Stage Society was a subscription-based theater company founded in 1899 to stage modern plays – including the work of Shaw, Yeats, Ibsen, Maeterlinck, and others – that might otherwise not be commercially produced. Their upcoming production was *The Race with the Shadow* (22-23 May 1921), translated from the German of Wilhelm von Scholz. Phoenix Society founder Montague Summers claimed in *The Restoration Theatre* (London: Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1934) that the "Council of the Stage Society never had anything to do with Phoenix business" (324).

4. The liberal *Daily News* was initially edited by Charles Dickens, whose satirical version of nineteenth-century temperance groups, the "United Grand Junction Ebenezer Temperance Association," appears in *The Pickwick Papers*. Members of the progressive "Manchester school" in economics and politics favored free trade, championed workers' rights, and supported temperance and moral betterment.

5. K. A. B., "An Elizabethan Melodrama," *Daily News* (25 Nov 1919), 7. TSE discussed the performance at length in "*The Duchess of Malfi* at the Lyric: and Poetic Drama."

6. William Archer, "Phoenix Society," *Star* (25 Nov 1919), 3; the final sentence that TSE quotes ("I am far from calling . . .") does not appear in the *Star* article.

7. Sir Leo George Chiozza Money, letter to the editor, *Daily News* (2 Dec 1919), 6. Money's publications on political economy include *Elements of the Fiscal Problem* (1903) and *101 points against "Tariff Reform"* (1909). TSE condenses the final sentence of Money's letter: "I did not see the Phoenix production, and do not know whether the society bowdlerised Webster as Lamb did Shakespeare in his redundant book of 'Tales,' but I hope that some fumigation took place."

8. Actor Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson (1853-1937, knighted 1913) had last played Hamlet in June 1913; Sir Henry Irving (John Henry Brodribb, 1838-1905, knighted 1895) had last played Shylock in June 1905.

9. Actor and theater manager Sir Francis Robert Benson (1858-1939, knighted in 1916).

10. *The Times* had recently announced the coming revival, in Oct 1921, of thirteen popular comic operas on which Librettist Sir W. S. Gilbert (1836-1911) and composer Sir Arthur Seymore Sullivan (1842-1900) collaborated from 1871 to 1896. Edward Brewster Sheldon's play *Romance* (premiere 1913, New York) opened in London in July 1915 and ran for a record 1,047 performances until 1918. J. Hartly Manners's *Peg o' My Heart: A Comedy of Youth* (premiere 1912, New York) played in London from Nov 1914 to May 1916 for more than 700 performances.

11. The musical "revue" – a choreographed variety program of sketches, songs, and dances, which originated in nineteenth-century Paris but had been gaining in popularity in Britain since 1908 – differed from music hall performances insofar as it was scripted, featured the same players throughout, and often sustained a topical theme or subject; the music hall, by contrast, featured independently booked performers in a wide variety of unrelated, trademark acts.

12. Late nineteenth-century admirers of the music hall included Arthur Symons, John Davidson, Max Beerbohm, Walter Sickert, and Ernest Dowson. Symons claimed in *Plays,*

Acting, and Music (London: Duckworth, 1903) that England was "really the country of the music-hall, the only country where it has taken firm root and flowered elegantly" (89).

13. Lloyd was born into a working-class family in the poor area of Hoxton, just north of the financial district in the city of London. Manchester and Lancashire are both in the north of England.

14. Wallace was born in Glasgow, Scotland.

15. Robey went into revue in 1916 with *The Bing Boys Are Here*; he had recently played popular roles in *Joy-Bells!*, a revue by Albert de Courville at the London Hippodrome, and *Johnny Jones*, a musical at the Alhambra, ongoing since June 1920.

16. American-born actress and singer Ethel Levey was known for her version of the Grizzly Bear dance, which TSE offered to teach Virginia Woolf in a letter of 2 June 1927 (*L3* 543). Levey had played recently in revues such as *Three Cheers!* and Albert de Courville's *Here and There!*; she currently held the lead in the musical comedy *Oh! Julie* at the Shaftesbury Theatre.

17. *bizarrerie*: freakishness, extravagance.

18. *Trans*: which is worth that of Bergson. Henri Bergson published *Le Rire: Essai sur la signification du comique* [*Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic*] in 1900.

19. *Trans*: "To find true comic savagery, however, you have to cross the Channel and visit the foggy realms of spleen. . . . the distinctive mark of this type of the comic was violence." Baudelaire, "*De l'essence du rire, et généralement du comique dans les arts plastiques*" [On the Essence of Laughter, and in General, on the Comic in the Plastic Arts] (1855). *Oeuvres complètes*, vol 4 (Paris: A. Lemerre, 1889), 351-52. *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, trans. Jonathan Mayne (New York: Da Capo, 1986), 159-60.

20. The exhibition of drawings by cartoonist Henry May Bateman (1887-1970) was held at the Leicester Galleries throughout Feb 1921 and coincided with the publication of his *A Book of Drawings* (London: Methuen, 1921), much of which first appeared in the comic magazine *Punch*.

21. English illustrators and caricaturists Thomas Rowlandson (1757-1827) and George Cruikshank (1792-1878).

22. "Portraits and Tyros," held at the Leicester Galleries (9-30 Apr 1921), was Lewis's first major solo exhibition of paintings, timed to coincide with the first issue of his experimental magazine *The Tyro*, to which TSE contributed (302, 306). TSE told John Quinn that he was "much interested" by Lewis's paintings at the show: "They were the first canvasses of his which have much interested me; I have heretofore thought of him as a consummate draughtsman rather than a painter. . . . It seems to me that he ought to go on and develop this type of work" (*L1* 558). The "Tyro," as Lewis described the angular, menacing caricatures in an interview for the *Daily Express* (11 Apr 1921), is "a new type of human animal like Harlequin or Punchinello – a new and sufficiently elastic form or 'mould' into which one can translate the satirical observations" (5); see illustration 16.

23. English painter and engraver William Hogarth (1697-1764).

24. The *Athenaeum* was absorbed by the *Nation* in Feb 1921 and issued as the *Nation and Athenaeum* until 1931. TSE wrote to Richard Aldington on 7 Apr about the *Athenaeum*'s "downfall" and its "complete extinction in the *Nation*" (*L1* 549).

25. Murry was editor of the *Athenaeum* from 1919 to 1921; he and TSE had recently begun corresponding again after months of silence. TSE wrote to him on 22 Apr: "I was convinced

that you had since a certain period lost all desire to see me . . . . But we shall soon meet, I trust, and discuss many things" (*L1* 554).

26. In addition to being a contributor to the *London Mercury* and regular reviewer for the *TLS*, Arthur Clutton-Brock was the author of *The Cathedral Church of York* (1899) and *What Is the Kingdom of Heaven* (1919), both reprinted in 1921.

27. TSE reviewed Lynd's *Old and New Masters* in 1919 (54); Lynd responded with a critique of *The Sacred Wood* in Dec 1920. A recent review in the *London Mercury* (Feb 1921) compared TSE's criticism in *SW* unfavorably to Lynd's *The Art of Letters* (1921) as well as to Clutton-Brock's *Essays on Books* (1920). Essays by both Edmund Gosse, whom TSE quotes in the introduction to *SW*, and Sir Sidney Colvin (1845-1927), author of *John Keats: His Life and Poetry, his Friends, Critics, and After-Fame* (1917) and editor of *The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson* (1911), had recently appeared in Squire's *London Mercury* (Apr 1921).

28. untraced.

29. Letters and advertisements by the Keats Memorial House Fund Committee had appeared recently in the *Times* and the *Athenaeum* to publicize the potential destruction of the Hampstead house where Keats lived in 1818 and to encourage donations and subscriptions for the £10,000 sum needed to purchase and restore the property; the committee acquired the house in Mar 1921. In Apr 1920, a commission appointed by the Bishop of London recommended the drastic reorganization of all ecclesiastical parishes in the city's financial district into four large parishes and the demolition of nineteen existing churches. On 12 Oct 1920, the London County Council issued its report, *Proposed Demolition of Nineteen City Churches, Report by the Clerk of the Council and the Architect of the Council* (London: Odhams Press, 1920), strongly opposing the proposal on the basis of the buildings' architectural value. TSE refers to the pamphlet in the notes to *TWL* (*CPP* 53).

30. Architect Christopher Wren (1632-1723) was responsible for the design and rebuilding of fifty-one churches – including St. Paul's Cathedral – after the Great Fire in London in 1666; he erected or restored fourteen of the nineteen buildings proposed for demolition. TSE wrote to Aldington on 3 Oct 1921, "I shd. love to write a book on Wren, or at least on the *églises assassinées* [murdered churches] of London" (*L1* 587). The authors of the *Proposed Demolition of Nineteen City Churches* call Wren's work "the culmination of English Renaissance architecture" (29). The brick edifice and small stone tower of All Hallows Church, London Wall (located along the northern perimeter of the City), was built by George Dance the Younger in the mid-eighteenth century.

31. St. Michael Paternoster Royal, on College Hill (formerly Paternoster Lane), south of the city center, was built by Wren in 1694. The ornate spire atop the 128-foot tower was designed by Wren's pupil, Nicholas Hawksmoor in 1713.

32. The authors of the *Proposed Demolition of Nineteen City Churches* indicate that large portions of a seventeenth-century coal tax were dedicated to rebuilding the structures after the fire, and that "the interior decoration and equipment of the new churches were provided for by their parishioners . . . out of gifts and bequests" (32).

33. *Inferno* XXXIII.46. *Trans*: "and below I heard the outlet of the horrible tower locked up" (*DC1* 373). *Read*: "ed io sentii chiavar l'uscio di sotto." From his place in the ninth circle of hell, Count Ugolino recalls with horror the moment when the tower where he was imprisoned with

his sons was permanently locked from the outside. TSE quotes this passage accurately in his note to line 412 of *TWL* (*CPP* 54).

34. Of the churches to be demolished, two were located on Lombard Street, home to Lloyds Bank, where TSE worked from 1917 to 1925: All Hallows, Lombard Street – whose eighty-five-foot tower was erected by Wren in 1694 – and St. Mary Woolnoth – whose tower is composed of two flat-topped turrets supported by Corinthian columns – at the junction of Lombard and King William Streets. The latter appears in *TWL*: "a crowd . . . Flowed up the hill and down King William Street, / To where Saint Mary Woolnoth kept the hours" (*CPP* 39).

John Dryden[1]

If the prospect of delight be wanting (which alone justifies the perusal of poetry) we may let the reputation of Dryden sleep in the manuals of literature. To those who are genuinely insensible of his genius (and these are probably the majority of living readers of poetry) we can only oppose illustrations of the following proposition: that their insensibility does not merely signify indifference to satire and wit, but lack of perception of qualities not confined to satire and wit and present in the work of other poets whom these persons feel that they understand. To those whose taste in poetry is formed entirely upon the English poetry of the nineteenth century – to the majority – it is difficult to explain or excuse Dryden: the twentieth century is still the nineteenth, although it may in time acquire its own character. The nineteenth century had, like every other, limited tastes and peculiar fashions; and, like every other, it was unaware of its own limitations. Its tastes and fashions had no place for Dryden; yet Dryden is one of the tests of a catholic appreciation of poetry.

He is a successor of Jonson, and therefore the descendant of Marlowe; he is the ancestor of nearly all that is best in the poetry of the eighteenth century. Once we have mastered Dryden – and by mastery is meant a full and essential enjoyment, not the enjoyment of a private whimsical fashion – we can extract whatever enjoyment and edification there is in his contemporaries – Oldham, Denham, or the less remunerative Waller; and still more his successors – not only Pope, but Phillips, Churchill, Gray, Johnson, Cowper, Goldsmith.[2] His inspiration is prolonged in Crabbe and Byron; it even extends, as Mr. van Doren cleverly points out, to Poe.[3] Even the poets responsible for the revolt were well acquainted with him: Wordsworth knew his work, and Keats invoked his aid.[4] We cannot fully enjoy or rightly estimate a hundred years of English poetry unless we fully enjoy Dryden; and to enjoy Dryden means to pass beyond the limitations of the nineteenth century into a new freedom.

> All, all of a piece throughout!
> Thy Chase had a Beast in View;
> Thy Wars brought nothing about;
> Thy Lovers were all untrue.

'Tis well an Old Age is out,
And time to begin a New.[5]
. . . .
The world's great age begins anew,
The golden years return,
The earth doth like a snake renew
Her winter weeds outworn:
Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.[6]

The first of these passages is by Dryden, the second by Shelley; the second is found in the *Oxford Book of English Verse*, the first is not; yet we might defy anyone to show that the second is superior on intrinsically poetic merit. It is easy to see why the second should appeal more readily to the nineteenth, and what is left of the nineteenth under the name of the twentieth, century. It is not so easy to see propriety in an image which divests a snake of "winter weeds"; and this is a sort of blemish which would have been noticed more quickly by a contemporary of Dryden than by a contemporary of Shelley.[7]

These reflections are occasioned by an admirable book on Dryden which has appeared at this very turn of time, when taste is becoming perhaps more fluid and ready for a new mould. It is a book which every practitioner of English verse should study. The consideration is so thorough, the matter so compact, the appreciation so just, temperate, and enthusiastic, and supplied with such copious and well-chosen extracts from the poetry, the suggestion of astutely placed facts leads our thought so far, that there only remain to mention, as defects which do not detract from its value, two omissions: the prose is not dealt with, and the plays are somewhat slighted. What is especially impressive is the exhibition of the very wide range of Dryden's work, shown by the quotations of every species. Everyone knows *MacFlecknoe*, and parts of *Absalom and Achitophel*; in consequence, Dryden has sunk by the persons he has elevated to distinction – Shadwell and Settle, Shaftesbury and Buckingham.[8†] Dryden was much more than a satirist; to dispose of him as a satirist is to place an obstacle in the way of our understanding. At all events, we must satisfy ourselves of our definition of the term satire; we must not allow our familiarity with the word to blind us to differences and refinements; we must not assume that satire is a fixed type, and fixed to the prosaic, suited only to prose; we

must acknowledge that satire is not the same thing in the hands of two different writers of genius. The connotations of "satire" and of "wit," in short, may be only prejudices of nineteenth-century taste. Perhaps, we think, after reading Mr. van Doren's book, a juster view of Dryden may be given by beginning with some other portion of his work than his celebrated satires; but even here there is much more present, and much more that is poetry, than is usually supposed.

The piece of Dryden's which is the most fun, which is the most sustained display of surprise after surprise of wit from line to line, is *MacFlecknoe*. Dryden's method here is something very near to parody; he applies vocabulary, images, and ceremony which arouse epic associations of grandeur, to make an enemy helplessly ridiculous. But the effect, though disastrous for the enemy, is very different from that of the humour which merely belittles, such as the satire of Mark Twain.[9] Dryden continually enhances: he makes his object great, in a way contrary to expectation; and the total effect is due to the transformation of the ridiculous into poetry. As an example may be taken a fine passage plagiarized from Cowley, from lines which Dryden must have marked well, for he quotes them directly in one of his prefaces. Here is Cowley:

> Where their vast courts the mother-waters keep,
> And undisturbed by moons in silence sleep. . . .
> Beneath the dens where unfledged tempests lie,
> And infant winds their tender voices try.[10]

In *MacFlecknoe* this becomes:

> Where their vast courts the mother-strumpets keep,
> And undisturbed by watch, in silence sleep.
> Near these, a nursery erects its head,
> Where queens are formed, and future heroes bred;
> Where unfledged actors learn to laugh and cry,
> Where infant punks their tender voices try,
> And little Maximins the gods defy.[11]

The passage from Cowley is by no means despicable verse. But it is a commonplace description of commonly poetic objects; it has not the element of *surprise* so essential to poetry, and this Dryden provides. A clever versifier might have written Cowley's lines; only a poet could have made what Dryden made of them. It is impossible to dismiss his verses as "prosaic";

turn them into prose and they are transmuted, the fragrance is gone. The reproach of the prosaic, levelled at Dryden, rests upon a confusion between the emotions considered to be poetic – which is a matter allowing considerable latitude of fashion – and the *result* of personal emotion in poetry; and, also,[12†] there is the emotion *depicted* by the poet in some kinds of poetry, of which the *Testaments* of Villon is an example.[13] Again, there is the intellect, the originality and independence and clarity of what we vaguely call the poet's "point of view." Our valuation of poetry, in short, depends upon several considerations, upon the permanent and upon the mutable and transitory.[14†] When we try to isolate the essentially poetic, we bring our pursuit in the end to something insignificant; our standards vary with every poet whom we consider. All we can hope to do, in the attempt to introduce some order into our preferences, is to clarify our reasons for finding pleasure in the poetry that we like.

With regard to Dryden, therefore, we can say this much. Our taste in English poetry has been largely founded upon a partial perception of the value of Shakespeare and Milton, a perception which dwells upon sublimity of theme and action. Shakespeare had a great deal more; he had nearly everything to satisfy our various desires for poetry. The point is that the depreciation or neglect of Dryden is not due to the fact that his work is not poetry, but to a prejudice that the material, the feelings, out of which he built is not poetic.[15†] Thus Matthew Arnold observes, in mentioning Dryden and Pope together, that "their poetry is conceived and composed in their wits, genuine poetry is conceived in the soul."[16] Arnold was, perhaps, not altogether the detached critic when he wrote this line; he may have been stirred to a defence of his own poetry, conceived and composed in the soul of a mid-century Oxford graduate. Pater remarks that Dryden:

> Loved to emphasize the distinction between poetry and prose, the protest against their confusion coming with somewhat diminished effect from one whose poetry was so prosaic.[17]

But Dryden was right, and the sentence of Pater is cheap journalism. Hazlitt, who had perhaps the most uninteresting mind of all our distinguished critics, says:

> Dryden and Pope are the great masters of the artificial style of poetry of our language, as the poets of whom I have already treated – Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton – were of the natural.[18]

In one sentence Hazlitt has committed at least four crimes against taste. It is bad enough to lump Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton together under the denomination of "natural"; it is bad to commit Shakespeare to one style only; it is bad to join Dryden and Pope together; but the last absurdity is the contrast of Milton, our greatest master of the *artificial* style, with Dryden, whose *style* (vocabulary, syntax, and order of thought) is in a high degree natural. And what all these objections come to, we repeat, is a repugnance for the material out of which Dryden's poetry is built.

It would be truer to say, indeed, even in the form of the unpersuasive paradox, that Dryden is distinguished principally by his *poetic* ability. We prize him, as we do Mallarmé, for what he made of his material. Our estimate is only in part the appreciation of ingenuity: in the end the result *is* poetry. Much of Dryden's unique merit consists in his ability to make the small into the great, the prosaic into the poetic, the trivial into the magnificent. In this he differs not only from Milton, who required a canvas of the largest size, but from Pope, who required one of the smallest. If you compare any satiric "character" of Pope with one of Dryden, you will see that the method and intention are widely divergent. When Pope alters, he diminishes; he is a master of miniature.[19] The singular skill of his portrait of Addison, for example, in the *Epistle to Arbuthnot*, depends upon the justice and reserve, the apparent determination not to exaggerate.[20] The genius of Pope is not for caricature. But the effect of the portraits of Dryden is to transform the object into something greater, as were transformed the verses of Cowley quoted above.

> A fiery soul, which working out its way,
> Fretted the pigmy body to decay:
> And o'er informed the tenement of clay.[21]

These lines are not merely a magnificent tribute. They create the object which they contemplate.[22†] Dryden is, in fact, much nearer to the master of comic creation than to Pope. As in Jonson, the effect is far from laughter; the comic is the material, the result is poetry. The Civic Guards of Rhodes:

> The country rings around with loud alarms,
> And raw in fields the rude militia swarms;
> Mouths without hands; maintained at vast expense,

In peace a charge, in war a weak defence;
Stout once a month they march, a blust'ring band,
And ever, but in times of need, at hand;
This was the morn, when issuing on the guard,
Drawn up in rank and file they stood prepared
Of seeming arms to make a short essay,
Then hasten to be drunk, the business of the day.[23]

Sometimes the wit appears as a delicate flavour to the magnificence, as in "Alexander's Feast":

Sooth'd with the sound the king grew vain;
Fought all his battles o'er again;
And thrice he routed all his foes, and thrice he slew the slain.[24]

The great advantage of Dryden over Milton is that while the former is always in control of his ascent, and can rise or fall at will (and how masterfully, like his own Timotheus, he directs the transitions!),[25] the latter has elected a perch from which he cannot afford to fall, and from which he is in danger of slipping.

food alike those pure
Intelligential substances require,
As doth your Rational; and both contain
Within them every lower faculty
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,
Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,
And corporeal to incorporeal turn.[26]

Dryden might have made poetry out of that; his translation from Lucretius is poetry.[27] But we have an ingenious example, on which to test our contrast of Dryden and Milton: it is Dryden's "Opera," called *The State of Innocence and Fall of Man*, of which Nathaniel Lee neatly says in his preface:

Milton did the wealthy mine disclose,
And rudely cast what you could well dispose:
He roughly drew, on an old-fashioned ground,
A chaos, for no perfect world were found,
Till through the heap, your mighty genius shined.[28†]

In the author's preface Dryden acknowledges his debt generously enough:

> The original being undoubtedly, one of the greatest, most noble, and most sublime poems, which either this age or nation has produced.[29]

The poem begins auspiciously:

> Lucifer.
>
> Is this the seat our conqueror has given?
> And this the climate we must change for Heaven?
> These regions and this realm my wars have got;
> This mournful empire is the loser's lot:
> In liquid burnings, or on dry to dwell,
> Is all the sad variety of Hell.[30]

It is an early work; it is on the whole a feeble work; it is not deserving of sustained comparison with *Paradise Lost*. But "all the sad variety of Hell"! Dryden is already stirring; he has assimilated what he could from Milton; and he has shown himself capable of producing as splendid verse.

The capacity for assimilation, and the consequent extent of range, are conspicuous qualities of Dryden. He advanced and exhibited his variety by constant translation; and his translations of Horace, of Ovid, of Lucretius, are admirable.[31] His gravest defects are supposed to be displayed in his dramas, but if these were more read they might be more praised. From the point of view of either the Elizabethan or the French drama they are obviously inferior; but the charge of inferiority loses part of its force if we admit that Dryden was not quite trying to compete with either, but was pursuing a direction of his own. He created no character; and although his arrangements of plot manifest exceptional ingenuity, it is the pure magnificence of diction, of poetic diction, that keeps his plays alive:

> How I loved
> Witness ye days and nights, and all ye hours,
> That danced away with down upon your feet,
> As all your business were to count my passion.
> One day passed by, and nothing saw but love;
> Another came, and still 'twas only love:
> The suns were wearied out with looking on,
> And I unfired with loving.
> I saw you every day and all the day;
> And every day was still but as the first:
> So eager was I still to see you more . . .

While within your arms I lay,
The world fell mould'ring from my hands each hour.[32]

Such language is pure Dryden: it sounds, in Mr. van Doren's phrase, "like a gong" [110]. *All for Love*, from which the lines are taken, is Dryden's best play, and this is perhaps the highest reach. In general, he is best in his plays when dealing with situations which do not demand great emotional concentration; when his situation is more trivial, and he can practise his art of making the small great. The back-talk between the Emperor and his Empress Nourmahal, in *Aurungzebe*, is admirable purple comedy:

Emperor.

Such virtue is the plague of human life:
A virtuous woman, but a cursèd wife.
In vain of pompous chastity y'are proud:
Virtue's adultery of the tongue, when loud.
I, with less pain, a prostitute could bear,
Than the shrill sound of virtue, virtue hear.
In unchaste wives –
There's yet a kind of recompensing ease:
Vice keeps 'em humble, gives 'em care to please:
But against clamourous virtue, what defence?
It stops our mouths, and gives your noise pretence. . . .

What can be sweeter than our native home?
Thither for ease, and soft repose, we come;
Home is the sacred refuge of our life:
Secure from all approaches but a wife.
If thence we fly, the cause admits no doubt:
None but an inmate foe could force us out.
Clamours, our privacies uneasy make:
Birds leave their nests disturbed, and beasts their haunts forsake.[33]

But drama is a mixed form; pure magnificence will not carry it through. The poet who attempts to achieve a play by the single force of the word provokes comparison, however strictly he confine himself to his capacity, with poets of other gifts. Corneille and Racine do not attain their triumphs by magnificence of this sort; they have concentration also, and, in the midst of their phrases, an undisturbed attention to the human soul as they knew it.

Nor is Dryden unchallenged in his supreme ability to make the ridiculous, or the trivial, great.

> Avez-vous observé que maints cercueils de vieilles
> Sont presque aussi petits que celui d'un enfant?[34]

Those lines are the work of a man whose verse is as magnificent as Dryden's, and who could see profounder possibilities in wit, and in violently joined images, than ever were in Dryden's mind. For Dryden, with all his intellect, had a commonplace mind. His powers were, we believe, wider, but no greater, than Milton's; he was confined by boundaries as impassable, though less strait. He bears a curious antithetical resemblance to Swinburne. Swinburne was also a master of words, but Swinburne's words are all suggestions and no denotation; if they suggest nothing, it is because they suggest too much.[35] Dryden's words, on the other hand, are precise, they state immensely, but their suggestiveness is often nothing.[36†]

> That short dark passage to a future state;
> That melancholy riddle of a breath,
> That something, or that nothing, after death.[37]

is a riddle, but not melancholy enough, in Dryden's splendid verse. The question, which has certainly been waiting, may justly be asked: whether, without this which Dryden lacks, verse can be poetry?[38†] What is man to decide what poetry is?[39] Dryden's use of language is not, like that of Swinburne, weakening and demoralizing. Let us take as a final test his elegy upon Oldham, which deserves not to be mutilated:

> Farewell, too little and too lately known,
> Whom I began to think and call my own;
> For sure our souls were near allied, and thine
> Cast in the same poetic mould with mine.
> One common note on either lyre did strike,
> And knaves and fools we both abhorred alike.
> To the same goal did both our studies drive;
> The last set out the soonest did arrive.
> Thus Nisus fell upon the slippery place,
> Whilst his young friend performed and won the race.
> O early ripe! to thy abundant store
> What could advancing age have added more?

It might (what nature never gives the young)
Have taught the numbers of thy native tongue.
But satire needs not those, and wit will shine
Through the harsh cadence of a rugged line.
A noble error, and but seldom made,
When poets are by too much force betrayed.
Thy generous fruits, though gathered ere their prime,
Still showed a quickness; and maturing time
But mellows what we write to the dull sweets of rhyme.
Once more, hail, and farewell; farewell, thou young,
But ah! too short, Marcellus of our tongue!
Thy brows with ivy and with laurels bound;
But fate and gloomy night encompass thee around.[40]

From the perfection of such an elegy we cannot detract; the lack of suggestiveness[41†] is compensated by the satisfying completeness of the statement. Dryden lacked what his master Jonson possessed, a large and unique view of life; he lacked insight, he lacked profundity. But where Dryden fails to satisfy, the nineteenth century does not satisfy us either; and where that century has condemned him, it is itself condemned. In the next revolution of taste it is possible that poets may turn to the study of Dryden. He remains one of those who have set standards for English verse which it is desperate to ignore.

NOTES

1. As printed in *SE*; originally published in *TLS*, 1012 (9 June 1921), 361-62, a review of *The Poetry of John Dryden*, by Mark Van Doren (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe, 1920). Pp. vi + 361; reprinted by the Hogarth Press as the first of three essays in *Homage to John Dryden* (1924). TSE told Richard Aldington on 23 June 1921, "My Dryden was not good, because only a series of unconnected scraps" (*L1* 568). Van Doren (1894-1972), author of *Henry David Thoreau: A Critical Study* (1916), was professor of English at Columbia University from 1920 to 1959.

2. All English or Irish poets mentioned by Van Doren: John Oldham (1653-83), John Denham, Edmund Waller, Edward Phillips (1630-96), Charles Churchill (1731-64), Thomas Gray, Samuel Johnson, William Cowper, and Oliver Goldsmith.

3. "It is difficult to believe," Van Doren suggests, "that Poe did not have in mind the superb second stanza of the *Song for St. Cecilia's Day* (1687) when he began his *Israfel*" (333).

4. Though he valued Dryden less than Pope as a poet, Wordsworth told Sir Walter Scott that Dryden possessed "a certain ardour and impetuosity of mind, with an excellent ear" (qtd. in Van Doren, 319). Keats purportedly composed *Lamia* "'after much study of Dryden's

versification,'" and his *Isabella*, Van Doren observes, borrows from Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis* (330-32).

5. From the last stanza of Dryden's "The Secular Masque" (1700). TSE follows the capitalization of the edition that he owned, *The Poems of John Dryden*, ed. John Sargeaunt (London: Henry Frowde, 1910), but he omits the indications of changes of speaker that occur in the penultimate and final lines.

6. The first stanza of the final chorus of Shelley's *Hellas: A Lyrical Drama* (1822) (ll. 1060-65); it is printed, as TSE points out in the following sentence, by Arthur Quiller-Couch as "Hellas" in the *Oxford Book of English Verse* (1900). TSE's quotation follows the *Oxford Book*.

7. TSE later expanded on this criticism to William Empson: "Mr. Eliot said that *snakes* do not *renew* their cast skins, and do not cast them at the end of *winter*; and that a seventeenth-century poet would have known his own mind on such points." *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1947), 159.

8†. In *HJD*, printer's error: "Shadwell of Settle"

All men whom Dryden satirizes in either *Absalom and Achitophel* (1681) or *Mac Flecknoe* (1682) (the title of which TSE consistently spells as one word): Thomas Shadwell (ca. 1640-92), Elkanah Settle (1648-1724), Anthony Ashley Cooper, first earl of Shaftesbury (1621-83), and George Villiers, second duke of Buckingham (1628-87). Van Doren considers Dryden's character sketches of them among the few "splendid fragments" that preserve his literary reputation (308).

9. Mark Twain (Samuel Langhorne Clemens) (1835-1910).

10. From Cowley's unfinished *Davideis* (1656), ll. 79-80 and 75-76. Dryden quotes the first line in the Preface to *The State of Innocence and Fall of Man: An Opera* (1677), which is titled "Heroic Poetry and Poetic Licence, The Author's Apology" in the Everyman edition of *Dramatic Essays by John Dryden* (London: Dent, 1912) that TSE owned and inscribed "Apr 1920."

11. *Mac Flecknoe*, ll. 72-78; Van Doren quotes both the preceding passage and an abbreviation of this one (27).

12†. In *TLS* and *HJD*: "poetry; and, in the third place"

13. TSE praised the "permanent intensity" of emotion in Villon's *Le Petit Testament and Le Grand Testament* in "Modern Tendencies in Poetry" (215).

14†. *TLS* and *HJD*: "mutable and upon the transitory."

15†. In *TLS*: "out of which he built it is not poetic."

16. *Read*: "conceived and composed in the soul." From Arnold's introduction to the selections by Thomas Gray in *The English Poets: Selections with Critical Introductions by Various Writers, Vol III: Addison to Blake*, ed. Thomas Humphrey Ward (London: Macmillan, 1890), 314; qtd. in Van Doren, 322.

17. Walter Pater, "Style" (1889); qtd. in Van Doren, 324.

18. The first sentence of Hazlitt's "Lecture IV. On Dryden and Pope" in *Lectures on the English Poets* (London: Taylor and Hessey, 1818), 135; not in Van Doren.

19. Van Doren makes a similar contrast between Dryden and Pope: "Dryden could not possibly succeed in miniatures" (125).

20. Pope's portrayal of Joseph Addison ("Atticus") (1672-1719), author of *Cato: A Tragedy* (1713) and co-founder of *The Spectator*, appears in *An Epistle from Mr. Pope, to Dr. Arbuthnot* (1735), ll. 193-214.

21. Dryden, *Absalom and Achitophel* I.156-58, describing Shaftesbury; qtd. twice in Van Doren (16, 199).

22†. *TLS* and *HJD*: "the object which they contemplate; the poetry is purer than anything in Pope except the last lines of the *Dunciad*."

23. "Cymon and Iphigenia," in *Fables, Ancient and Modern; Translated into Verse, from Homer, Ovid, Boccace, & Chaucer; with Original Poems* (1700), ll. 399-408; qtd. in Van Doren, 213-14.

24. The first lines of stanza iv from Dryden's "Alexander's Feast; or, The Power of Musique, An Ode in Honour of St. Celia's Day" (1697).

25. In "Alexander's Feast," the songs of Timotheus, the court flute player, compel Alexander through a series of emotions: "Timotheus, to his breathing Flute / And sounding Lyre, / Cou'd swell the Soul to rage, or kindle soft Desire"; Van Doren quotes only the last line (259).

26. *Paradise Lost* V. 407-13.

27. Dryden's five translations from Lucretius's *De rerum natura* [*On the Nature of Things*] appeared in *Sylvae; or, The Second Part of Poetical Miscellanies* (1685).

28†. In *TLS*: "For Milton did the wealthy"

Nathaniel Lee (ca. 1653-92), "To Mr. Dryden, on his Poem of Paradise," ll. 12-16, published as a preface to Dryden's *The State of Innocence and Fall of Man: An Opera* (1677).

29. From the first paragraph of "Heroic Poetry and Poetic Licence," *Dramatic Essays by John Dryden*, 108.

30. Dryden, *The State of Innocence and Fall of Man*, ll. 1-6.

31. More than two-thirds of Dryden's nondramatic verse is composed of translations, beginning with *Ovid's Epistles* in 1680 and appearing regularly in stand-alone volumes and in four collected miscellanies, which he prepared with Jacob Tonson under the subtitle *Poetical Miscellanies* or *Miscellany Poems* from 1684 to 1694.

32. *All for Love; or, The World Well Lost* (1678), II.282-91, 295-96; not in Van Doren.

33. *Aureng-Zebe* (1676), II.257-67; 272-79.

34. *Trans*: Have you noticed that many coffins of old women / are almost as small as those of a child? Charles Baudelaire, "Les Petites Vieilles" [The Little Old Women], ll. 21-22.

35. TSE remarked at length on Swinburne's diffusive suggestiveness in "Swinburne as Poet" (181).

36†. In *TLS* and *HJD*: "almost nothing."

37. *Aureng-Zebe* V.301-03. The first two lines are spoken by Indamora; the last, by Nourmahal; not quoted in Van Doren.

38†. In *TLS*: "this which Dryden lacks, poetry can exist?"

39. Cf. Psalm 8:4: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?"

40. "To the Memory of Mr. Oldham," in *The Remains of Mr. John Oldham in Verse and Prose* (1684).

41†. In *TLS* and *HJD*: "the lack of nebula"

London Letter: July, 1921[1]

The Dial, 71 (Aug 1921) 213-17

The vacant term of wit set in early this year with a fine hot rainless spring; the crop of murders and divorces has been poor compared with that of last autumn; Justice Darling (comic magistrate) has been silent, and has only raised his voice to declare that he does not know the difference between Epstein and Einstein (laughter).[2] Einstein the Great has visited England, and delivered lectures to uncomprehending audiences, and been photographed for the newspapers smiling at Lord Haldane. We wonder how much that smile implies; but Einstein has not confided its meaning to the press. He has met Mr. Bernard Shaw, but made no public comment on that subject.[3] Einstein has taken his place in the newspapers with the comet, the sun-spots, the poisonous jellyfish and octopus at Margate, and other natural phenomena.[4] Mr. Robert Lynd has announced that only two living men have given their names to a school of poetry: King George V and Mr. J. C. Squire.[5] A new form of influenza has been discovered, which leaves extreme dryness and a bitter taste in the mouth.[6]

The fine weather and the coal strike have turned a blazing glare on London, discovering for the first time towers and steeples of an uncontaminated white.[7] The smile is without gaiety. What is spring without the Opera? Drury Lane and Covent Garden mourn; the singers have flocked, we are told, to New York, where such luxuries can be maintained. They have forgotten thee, O Sion.[8] Opera was one of the last reminders of a former excellence of life, a sustaining symbol even for those who seldom went. England sits in her weeds: eleven theatres are on the point of closing, as the public will no longer pay the prices required by the cost.[9] Considering the present state of the stage, there is little direct cause for regret. An optimist might even affirm that when everything that is bad and expensive is removed, its place may be supplied by something good and cheap; on the other hand it is more likely to be supplied by what is called, in the language of the day, the "super-cinema."[10] Yet the Everyman Theatre at Hampstead, formed on a similar ideal to that of the Théâtre du Vieux Colombier in Paris, has, I hear, done well with a season of Shaw plays, though the performance has been criticized.[11] And M. Diaghileff, who has lately arrived with

his Ballet and with Stravinsky, has crowded houses. Massine is not there, but Lopokova in perfection. Not yet having had the opportunity of going, I can say nothing about either of the new ballets, *Chout* or *Cuadro Flamenco*.[12] Two years ago M. Diaghileff's ballet arrived, the first Russian dancers since the war: we greeted the *Good-humoured Ladies*, and the *Boutique Fantasque*, and the *Three-Cornered Hat*, as the dawn of an art of the theatre.[13] And although there has been nothing since that could be called a further development, the ballet will probably be one of the influences forming a new drama, if a new drama ever comes. I mean of course the later ballet which has just been mentioned; for the earlier ballet, if it had greater dancers – Nijinsky or Pavlowa – had far less significance or substantiality.[14] The later ballet is more sophisticated, but also more simplified, and simplifies more; and what is needed of art is a simplification of current life into something rich and strange.[15] This simplification neither Congreve nor Mr. Shaw attained; and however brilliant their comedies, they are a divagation from art.[16]

In this connection, it may be observed that Mr. Gordon Craig has incurred abuse by an essay which fills the February number of the *Chapbook*, entitled "Puppets and Poets."[17] Mr. Craig's style of writing, from what one can judge of it in this essay or series of notes, is certainly deplorable; but his essay contains a great deal of interest and some sense. He was rebuked for pointing out that the Puppet is not intended to deceive us into thinking that it is human, and afterwards praising one of the Japanese figures illustrated by saying that "this . . . hand almost seems prepared to shake another hand."[18] Why, says the critic, this is a contradiction: is the puppet intended to resemble a human being or not? If it is, then it is merely a substitute for a human being, only tolerable on account of the high price of actors; if it is not, why should the proximity of the resemblance be a merit? But Mr. Craig has merely implied what is a necessary condition of all art: the counter-thrust of strict limitations of form and the expression of life. Ordinary social drama acknowledges no limitations, except some tricks of the stage. A form, when it is merely tolerated, becomes an abuse. Tolerate the stage aside and the soliloquy, and they are intolerable; make them a strict rule of the game, and they are a support. A new form, like that of the modern ballet, is as strict as any old one, perhaps stricter. Artists are constantly impelled to invent new difficulties for themselves; cubism is not licence, but an attempt to establish order. These reflections provoked by the ballet suggest at any rate a theory that might be maintained throughout an evening's conversation.

MR. STRACHEY'S BOOK

Mr. Lytton Strachey's *Queen Victoria* has succeeded and far surpassed Mrs. Asquith's book in popularity: it is found at every level; it is discussed by *everyone* and is discharged into the suburbs by every lending-library.[19] It would be absurd to say that the vogue of the book is not deserved; equally absurd to say that it is deserved, since vogue and the merits of a book have nothing in common. Its popularity is not due to faults, but rather to merits, though partly to the qualities which are not the most important. The notices which it has had, long and enthusiastic, from every paper, have been of great interest as an index to the simple and unsuspecting mind of the reviewer. What is of most interest in the book is Mr. Strachey's mind, in his motives for choosing his material, in his method in dealing with it, in his style, in his peculiar combination of biography and history. It was evident from *Eminent Victorians*, and is equally evident from *Queen Victoria*, that Mr. Strachey has a romantic mind – that he deals, too, with his personages, not in a spirit of "detachment," but by attaching himself to them, *tout entier à sa proie attaché*.[20] He has his favourites, and these are chosen by his emotion rather than design, by his feeling for what can be made of them with his great ability to turn the commonplace into something immense and grotesque. But it must be a peculiar commonplace, although Mr. Strachey is limited only by the degree of interest he takes in his personage. There must be a touch of the fantastic, of a fantastic that lies hidden for Mr. Strachey to discover. Gladstone appears to be without it; Disraeli appears to be too consciously playing a *rôle* for Mr. Strachey to extract much fantasy from him.[21] What is especially charming is the fusion of irony with romance, of private with public, of trivial and serious. The fusion is reflected in the style, which, although Mr. Strachey's, may be formulated as a mixture of Gibbon with Macaulay – Gibbon in the irony, and Macaulay in the romance.[22] Mr. Strachey, without your being aware of it, places his sitter in just this light, and with a phrase – "Lord Melbourne, an autumn rose" – "Mr. Creevey, grown old now," imposes his point of view.[23] The innocent accept this under the impression that they are acquiring information. If it were not under the spell of Mr. Strachey's mind, if we examined the letters of the Queen, or Balmoral, or the Albert Memorial, or the Crystal Palace, without Mr. Strachey's directions, we might see them very differently, and quite as justly.[24] Mr. Strachey never appears to impose himself, he never drives a hint towards a theory, but he never relaxes his influence.

Mr. Strachey is a part of history rather than a critic of it; he has invented new sensations from history, as Bergson has invented new sensations from metaphysics.[25] No other historian has so deliberately cultivated the feelings which the inspection of an historical character can arouse. The strange, the surprising, is of course essential to art; but art has to create a new world, and a new world must have a new structure. Mr. Joyce has succeeded, because he has very great constructive ability; and it is the structure which gives his later work its unique and solitary value.[26] There are several other writers – among the very best that we have – who can explore feeling – even Mr. Ronald Firbank, who has a sense of beauty in a very degraded form.[27] The craving for the fantastic, for the strange is legitimate and perpetual; everyone with a sense of beauty has it. The strongest, like Mr. Joyce, make their feeling into an articulate external world; what might crudely be called a more feminine type, when it is also a very sophisticated type, makes its art by feeling and by contemplating the feeling, rather than the object which has excited it or the object into which the feeling might be made. Of this type of writing the recent book of sketches by Mrs. Woolf, *Monday or Tuesday*, is the most extreme example.[28] A good deal of the secret of the charm of Mrs. Woolf's shorter pieces consists in the immense disparity between the object and the train of feeling which it has set in motion. Mrs. Woolf gives you the minutest datum, and leads you on to explore, quite consciously, the sequence of images and feelings which float away from it. The result is something which makes Walter Pater appear an unsophisticated rationalist, and the writing is often remarkable. The book is one of the most curious and interesting examples of a process of dissociation which in that direction, it would seem, cannot be exceeded.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Composed between 11 June, when Einstein's photograph appeared in *The Daily News* (see n. 3 below), and 27 June, the date of the opening of Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps*, which TSE discusses at length in the next *Dial*. This was the third of TSE's eight regular "London Letters" for the *Dial*, each bearing the date below the title.

2. Charles John Darling (1849-1936), Judge in the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of England since 1897, had become well known for his role in a sensational 1918 libel trial. TSE imitates the parenthetical manner in which the *Times* regularly indicated the courtroom's laughter in response to his remarks. Sculptor Jacob Epstein (1880-1959) had been in the news recently (*Times*, 2 May 1921, 12) when he publicly objected to the British Museum's restorations to the Elgin Marbles.

3. German physicist Albert Einstein (1879-1955) arrived in Liverpool on 8 June and lectured (entirely in German) on relativity to an audience of 1,000 on the following day at the University of Manchester. He reached London two days later and was greeted by former Lord Chancellor Richard Burdon Haldane (1856-1928), with whom he appeared in photographs, "enjoying a joke with his host" (*Daily News*, 11 June, 5), and who presided over his highly publicized lecture at King's College on 13 June. George Bernard Shaw was present at a reception for Einstein at Haldane's house on the evening of 10 June.

4. On 1 June the *Times* reported ("Stars of the Month") the appearances of multiple comets, including the Pons-Winnecke and the Reid; the same column detailed the appearance of abnormally large equatorial sunspots that had caused magnetic disturbances; the *Daily News* reported the sunspot phenomena on 10 June (5). TSE later spent nearly a month in Oct-Nov 1922 in the seaside town of Margate, where he drafted the majority of *TWL*.

5. Lynd's reference is untraced; TSE may refer generally to Lynd's consistent praise of the Georgian poets and of J. C. Squire, whose wide-reaching influence in literary journalism gave rise to the epithet "Squirearchy." Lynd published an essay on Squire in *Old and New Masters*, which TSE reviewed (54), and he devoted a long chapter to the Georgian poets in *The Art of Letters* (1921), which bore a dedication to Squire.

6. Perhaps a reference to the sickness briefly reported in the *Daily News* (17 June 1921) under the heading "A New Complaint": "Many people are suffering from a complaint resembling influenza, due, it is stated, to germs being blown about in the air owing to the non-watering of the roads" (5). Identified by Lawrence Rainey, *The Annotated Waste Land with Eliot's Contemporary Prose* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2005), 240.

7. The coal miners' strike lasted from 1 Apr to 1 July 1921. TSE wrote to Richard Aldington on 7 Apr: "I fear that in a day or two our communications will be stopped by the strike, for god knows how long" (*L1* 550). On 20 May, the *Daily News* ran a large aerial photograph of the city, titled "Smokeless London," with the caption: "Thanks to the coal crisis, which has reduced fires in London to a minimum, people are discovering a new city. Now that the usual smoke pall no longer overhangs us, wonderful views can be obtained in all directions" (8).

8. An allusion to Psalm 137 ("we wept, / when we remembered Zion . . . If I forget thee, O Jerusalem"), which TSE also invokes in "The Fire Sermon" in *TWL* (*CPP* 62).

9. A reporter for the *Times* (9 June 1921) referred to the theater "slump" (resulting from the paralyzing effects of the coal miners' strike) as an "unprecedented depression in the London theatrical world" (8). Despite hopes of improvement earlier in the month, the *Times* reported on 20 June that the depression had deepened and that 12 theaters had closed, including Drury Lane and Covent Garden.

10. Numerous new "super cinemas" – immense, lavishly decorated movie theaters with cinema organs, orchestra pits, balconies, and often more than 2,000 seats – had begun to appear since the first in London, the Palmadium Cinema, Palmers Green, had opened in Dec 1920.

11. A repertory theater founded by Norman Macdermott in 1920, the Everyman was built in the suburb of Hampstead to resist the commercialism of West End theaters and was dedicated initially to simplified productions of shorter plays. Its second season, which began in Jan 1921, featured eight plays by George Bernard Shaw. A full-page advertisement for the Everyman ran in the issue of the *Chapbook* that TSE discusses below. Reviews of the productions were largely positive, though writers for *The Spectator* (28 May 1921) and *The Bookman* (May 1921) both

criticized the production of Shaw's *Major Barbara*. Macdermott admired the Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier, founded in 1913 under the direction of Jacques Copeau, whose editorial position at *La Nouvelle Revue française* provided a platform for his aim to present simplified, anticommercial productions of classic and contemporary plays.

12. The third postwar season of the Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes began in London on 26 May at the Prince's Theatre. Dancer and choreographer Léonide Massine (1895-1979) had been dismissed by Diaghilev earlier in 1921 after six years of collaboration. Lydia Lopokova (1892-1981) danced with the company sporadically between 1910 and 1921; TSE had seen her in *The Good-Humoured Ladies* during the 1919 season (see illustration 19). *Chout* opened in London on 9 June; *Cuadro Flamenco*, on 30 May.

13. The Ballets Russes returned to London for the first time since 1914 from 5 Sept 1918 to 30 July 1919. TSE attended at least three performances at the Alhambra Threatre: on 13 May, for *Carnaval*, *The Good-Humoured Ladies*, and *The Firebird*; on 22 and 23 July for repeat performances of *The Three-Cornered Hat*, choreographed by Massine, as well as *Children's Tales*, *Papillons*, and *Prince Igor*.

14. Vaslav Nijinsky (1890-1950) was lead dancer and choreographer of the Ballets Russes during the prewar period from 1909 to 1913. TSE likely saw both him and dancer Anna Pavlova (1881-1931) in Paris in 1910-11, during Diaghilev's third season there.

15. An allusion to Ariel's song in *The Tempest* I.ii.562-65: "Nothing of him that doth fade / But doth suffer a sea-change / Into something rich and strange." TSE includes several adjacent lines from *The Tempest* in *TWL*, including "the king my father's wreck," "this music crept by me upon the waters," "those are pearls that were his eyes."

16. TSE had seen the Phoenix Society's production of *Love for Love* by William Congreve with Leonard and Virginia Woolf on 20 Mar 1921.

17. Gordon Craig (1872-1966), "Puppets and Poets," *Chapbook*, 20 (Feb 1921), 3-36. TSE later recalled first encountering Craig's work, particularly *The Art of the Theatre* (1905), as an undergraduate at Harvard. "Gordon Craig's Socratic Dialogues," *Drama* (Spring 1955), 16-21.

18. "Puppets and Poets" (36); *read*: "preparing." TSE may be recalling "A Plea for the Puppet," an anonymous review in the *TLS* (24 Feb) by D. L. Murray, who quotes the same statement, contradicts Craig's conclusions that puppets "perfect" human movement, and concludes: "The reproductions of Japanese puppets . . . come so near success that they reveal all the more clearly the hopelessness of the task" (122).

19. Lytton Strachey's *Queen Victoria* (London: Chatto and Windus, May 1921) had already reached its fifth printing by Aug 1921 and would sell more than 50,000 copies in its first year; the *Daily News* ranked it as the month's best seller by 15 June (7). In 1919, TSE wrote to Strachey that he imagined him "in a garden, conducting your clinic of Queen Victoria with perfect concentration" (*L1* 388). He told editor Scofield Thayer in May 1921: "I propose, in my next 'Letter,' to mention the fact that Strachey's book appeared here at about the same moment that it began appearing serially in the *New Republic*. I suppose that publication in New York was delayed to allow the readers of the *New Republic* to enjoy the first taste" (*L1* 561). The first volume of *The Autobiography of Margo Asquith*, by Margaret Asquith (1864-1945), wife of the former prime minister, was published in 1920.

20. *Trans*: "wholly attached to his prey"; TSE adapts the heroine's exclamation in Racine's *Phèdre* I.iii: "C'est Vénus tout entière à sa proie attaché" [It is Venus wholly attached to her prey].

21. Strachey discusses Queen Victoria's relationships with former prime ministers William Gladstone (1809-98) and Benjamin Disraeli in chapter VIII.

22. In contrast to Gibbon's use of epigrammatic wit and irony in *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-89), essayist Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-59), author of *The History of England from the Accession of James the Second* (5 vols, 1848), believed that history should rival the novel in readability and popularity.

23. William Lamb, second Viscount Melbourne (1779-1848) and politician Thomas Creevey (1768-1838); in *Queen Victoria*, 88, 91.

24. All structures associated with Victoria's reign and discussed by Strachey in *Queen Victoria*: Balmoral Castle in Scotland, purchased by Victoria and Prince Albert in 1852; the Albert Memorial in Kensington Gardens, opened in 1872; and the Crystal Palace, built in Hyde Park to house London's Great Exhibition, which Albert oversaw in 1851.

25. TSE regarded the seductive emotionalism of Bergson's philosophy with suspicion; he suggests problems with Bergson's theories of sensation and emotion in his 1913 talk to the Harvard Philosophy Club, "[Inconsistencies in Bergson's Idealism]" (1.167).

26. TSE had recently read three parts of *Ulysses* in manuscript ("Circe," "Eumaeus," and part of "Oxen of the Sun") and wrote to John Quinn on 9 May 1921: "the latter part of Ulysses . . . is truly magnificent" (*L1* 558). On 21 May, he wrote to Joyce personally to convey his admiration and his desire to repudiate a recently published negative review by Richard Aldington (*L1* 562). And after TSE's visit on 5 June, Virginia Woolf records his further praise: "Ulysses he says is prodigious" (*Diary* 2.122).

27. Novelist Ronald Firbank (1886-1926) had recently published *Valmouth: A Romantic Novel* (1919) and *The Princess Zoubaroff: A Comedy* (1920). TSE likely read the chapter of *Valmouth* that had appeared in the pages preceding his own "Marivaux" in *Art & Letters* (1).

28. TSE spoke with Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) about the stories in her new collection, *Monday or Tuesday* (London: Hogarth, Apr 1921), at her home on 5 June 1921: "Eliot astounded me by praising Monday & Tuesday! . . . He picked out the String Quartet, especially the end of it. 'Very good,' he said, & meant it, I think. The Unwritten Novel he thought not successful: Haunted House 'extremely interesting'" (*Diary* 2.122).

London Letter: September, 1921[1]

The Dial, 71 (Oct 1921) 452-55

Looking back upon the past season in London – for no new season has yet begun – it remains certain that Strawinsky was our two months' lion. He has been the greatest success since Picasso. In London all the stars obey their seasons, though these seasons no more conform to the almanac than those which concern the weather. A mysterious law of appearance and disappearance governs everybody – or at least everybody who is wise enough to obey it. Who is Mr. Rubenstein?[2] The brilliant pianist. This summer he was everywhere; at every dinner, every party, every week-end; in the evening crisp and curled in a box; sometimes apparently in several boxes at once. He was prominent enough to have several doubles; numbers of men vaguely resembled him. Why this should have happened this year rather than last year, perhaps rather than next year, I for one cannot tell. Even very insignificant people feel the occult influence; one knows, oneself, that there are times when it is desirable to be seen and times when it is felicitous to vanish.

But Strawinsky, Lucifer of the season, brightest in the firmament, took the call many times, small and correctly neat in pince-nez. His advent was well prepared by Mr. Eugene Goossens – also rather conspicuous this year – who conducted two *Sacre du Printemps* concerts, and other Strawinsky concerts were given before his arrival.[3] The music was certainly too new and strange to please very many people; it is true that on the first night it was received with wild applause, and it is to be regretted that only three performances were given. If the ballet was not perfect, the fault does not lie either in the music, or in the choreography – which was admirable, or in the dancing – where Madame Sokolova distinguished herself.[4] To me the music seemed very remarkable – but at all events struck me as possessing a quality of modernity which I missed from the ballet which accompanied it. The effect was like *Ulysses* with illustrations by the best contemporary illustrator.

Strawinsky, that is to say, had done his job in the music. But music that is to be taken like operatic music, music accompanying and explained by an action, must have a drama which has been put through the same process of

development as the music itself. The spirit of the music was modern, and the spirit of the ballet was primitive ceremony. The Vegetation Rite upon which the ballet is founded remained, in spite of the music, a pageant of primitive culture.[5] It was interesting to any one who had read *The Golden Bough* and similar works, but hardly more than interesting. In art there should be interpenetration and metamorphosis. Even *The Golden Bough* can be read in two ways: as a collection of entertaining myths, or as a revelation of that vanished mind of which our mind is a continuation. In everything in the *Sacre du Printemps*, except in the music, one missed the sense of the present. Whether Strawinsky's music be permanent or ephemeral I do not know; but it did seem to transform the rhythm of the steppes into the scream of the motor horn, the rattle of machinery, the grind of wheels, the beating of iron and steel, the roar of the underground railway, and the other barbaric cries of modern life; and to transform these despairing noises into music.

MR. BERNARD SHAW

It is not within my province to discuss *Back to Methuselah*, but the appearance of the book may make some observations on Mr. Shaw not impertinent, and it is an advantage for my purpose that the book is as well known in America as it is here.[6] A valedictory tone in this book (already noticed by Mr. Seldes) is not inapposite to a successful season of his plays by Mr. Macdermott's company.[7] *Blanco Posnet* is now running at the Court Theatre.[8] The recognition indicated by this success implies perhaps that Mr. Shaw has attained, in the most eulogistic sense of his own term, the position of an Ancient.[9]

Seven years ago, in 1914, when Mr. Shaw came out with his thoughts about the War, the situation was very different.[10] It might have been predicted that what he said then would not seem subversive or blasphemous now. The public has accepted Mr. Shaw, not by recognizing the intelligence of what he said then, but by forgetting it; but we must not forget that at one time Mr. Shaw was a very unpopular man. He is no longer the gadfly of the commonwealth;[11] but even if he has never been appreciated, it is something that he should be respected. To-day he is perhaps an important elder man of letters in a sense in which Mr. Hardy is not. Hardy represents to us a still earlier generation not by his date of birth but by his type of mind. He is of the day before yesterday, whilst Shaw is of a to-day that is only this

evening. Hardy is Victorian, Shaw is Edwardian. Shaw is therefore more interesting to us, for by reflecting on his mind we may form some plausible conjecture about the mind of the next age – about what, in retrospect, the "present" generation will be found to have been. Shaw belongs to a fluid world, he is an insular Diderot, but more serious. I should say – for it is amusing, if unsafe, to prophesy – that we shall demand from our next leaders a purer intellect, more scientific, more logical, more rigorous. Shaw's mind is a free and easy mind: every idea, no matter how irrelevant, is welcome. Twenty years ago, even ten years ago, the Preface to *Methuselah* would have seemed a cogent synthesis of thought instead of a delightful farrago of Mr. Shaw's conversation about economics, politics, biology, dramatic and art criticism. It is not merely that Mr. Shaw is wilful; it is also that he lacks the interest in, and capacity for, continuous reasoning.

Mr. Shaw has never cajoled the public; it is no fault of his that he has been taken for a joker, a cleverer Oscar Wilde, when his intention was always austerely serious. It is his seriousness which has made him unpopular, which made Oscar Wilde appear, in comparison, dull enough to be a safe and respectable playwright. But Shaw has perhaps suffered in a more vital way from the public denseness; a more appreciative audience might have prevented him from being satisfied with an epigram instead of a demonstration. On the other hand Mr. Shaw himself has hardly understood his own seriousness, or known where it might lead him: he is somehow amazingly innocent. The explanation is that Mr. Shaw never was really interested in life. Had he been more curious about the actual and abiding human being, he might have been less clever and less surprising. He was interested in the comparatively transient things, in anything that can or should be changed; but he was not interested in, was rather impatient of, the things which always have been and always will be the same. Now the fact which makes *Methuselah* impressive is that the nature of the subject, the attempt to expose a panorama of human history "as far as thought can reach" almost compels Mr. Shaw to face ultimate questions.[12] His creative evolution proceeds so far that the process ceases to be progress, and progress ceases to have any meaning. Even the author appears to be conscious of the question whether the beginning and the end are not the same, and whether, as Mr. Bradley says, "whatever you know, it is all one."[13] (Certainly, the way of life of the younger generation, in his glimpse of life in the most remote future,

is unpleasantly like a Raymond Duncan or Margaret-Morris school of dancing in the present.)[14]

There is evidence that Mr. Shaw has many thoughts by the way; as a rule he welcomes them and seldom dismisses them as irrelevant. The pessimism of the conclusion of his last book is a thought which he has neither welcomed nor dismissed; and it is pessimism only because he has not realized that at the end he has only approached a beginning, that his end is only the starting point towards the knowledge of life.

The book may for a moment be taken as the last word of a century, perhaps of two centuries. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were the ages of logical science: not in the sense that this science actually made more progress than the others, but in the sense that it was biology that influenced the imagination of non-scientific people. Darwin is the representative of those years, as Newton of the seventeenth, and Einstein perhaps of ours. Creative evolution is a phrase that has lost both its stimulant and sedative virtues.[15] It is possible that an exasperated generation may find comfort in admiring, even if without understanding, mathematics, may suspect that precision and profundity are not incompatible, may find maturity as interesting as adolescence, and permanence more interesting than change. It must at all events be either much more demoralized intellectually than the last age, or very much more disciplined.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Composed between 20 July and 13 Aug 1921, when Shaw's *The Shewing-Up of Blanco Posnet* was running at the Queen's Theatre. This was the fourth of TSE's eight regular "London Letters" for the *Dial*, each bearing the date below the title.

2. Arthur Rubinstein (1887-1982) arrived from Paris in late May and shared a flat in Cork Street with Igor Stravinsky (also "Strawinsky"). He and the composer sat in the balcony at Queen's Hall for the controversial premiere of Stravinsky's *Symphonies d'instruments à vent* [Symphonies of Wind Instruments] on 10 June. Rubinstein gave a recital on 11 June at Queen's Hall.

3. Eugene Goossens (1893-1962) conducted the first orchestral performance in London of Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps* [The Rite of Spring] at Queen's Hall on 7 and 23 June, with the composer in attendance. Stravinsky's *Firebird Suite* (1919) had been conducted in Apr by Edward Clarke, and parts of the *Petrushka* suite were performed in early June by the London Symphony Orchestra. Diaghilev's Ballets Russes then performed Stravinsky's *Petrushka* in June, and his *Pulcinella* and *L'Oiseau de feu* [The Firebird] in July. After reviving *Le Sacre du printemps*, with new choreography by Léonide Massine, for Paris audiences in

1920, the Russian Ballet brought the new version to London for three performances: on 27 and 29 June and 1 July 1921 (see illustration 21).

4. English dancer Lydia Sokolova (1896-1974) played the chosen virgin in the first performance of *Le Sacre* on 27 June.

5. The original *Le Sacre du printemps* (1913) was based on rituals performed at the advent of spring by a prehistoric Slavic tribe; it was the product of the collaborative efforts of Stravinsky, who claimed to have dreamed of the sacrificial ceremony that it reenacts; painter Nicolas Roerich, who drew upon archaeological studies of ancient Russian folk customs; and choreographer Vaslav Nijinsky.

6. Shaw's five-part epic play *Back to Methuselah: A Metabiological Pentateuch* appeared simultaneously in London (Constable & Co.) and New York (Brentano's) in May 1921.

7. In his review of Shaw's novel two months before ("Struldbrugs and Supermen," *Dial*, Aug 1921), managing editor Gilbert Seldes (1893-1970) wrote: "the somber tone and the tragic earnestness . . . suggest that this is Mr. Shaw's last word" (231). TSE wrote to St. John Hutchinson on 13 Oct 1921, "In the *Dial*'s last note to me acknowledging my October Letter I thought I detected a slight note of disapproval at my having said so much about Shaw's book which had already been reviewed. I had been very hard put about to find enough material for that Letter" (*L1* 591). TSE discussed the noncommercial Everyman Theatre founded in 1920 by Norman Macdermott (1889-1977) in the previous "London Letter" (362).

8. *The Shewing-Up of Blanco Posnet: A Sermon in Crude Melodrama* (1909) was performed at the Queen's Theatre (rather than the Court) in the West End from 20 July to 13 Aug 1921 by the Everyman Theatre Repertory Company; it had also run for several weeks (beginning 14 Mar) at the company's home theatre in Hampstead.

9. Part V of Shaw's *Back to Methuselah* begins with a discussion between "The Youth" and "The Ancient," during which the latter advises: "My children: be content to let us ancients go our ways and enjoy ourselves in our own fashion" (237).

10. Shaw's antiwar pamphlet, "Common Sense about the War," appeared in England as a supplement to *The New Statesman* (14 Nov 1914), shortly after his "Open Letter to President Wilson" had been published in *The Nation* (7 Nov). The "Common Sense" pamphlet was printed alongside his letter to the president when it appeared in America in a supplement to *The New York Times* (Dec 1914).

11. Socrates in Plato's *Apology*, 30e: "I am that gadfly which God has given the state." *Plato's Apology of Socrates and Crito*, trans. Benjamin Jowett (New York: Century, 1903), 47.

12. "As Far as Thought Can Reach" is the title of *Back to Methuselah*, part V.

13. F. H. Bradley relates this aphorism regarding what he calls "the Unity of Science" – "Whatever you know it is all one" – in the preface (xv) to *Appearance and Reality: A Metaphysical Essay* (1893), a focus of TSE's dissertation (1.238).

14. Part V of *Back to Methuselah*, set in the year 31,920 AD, begins with "a dance of youths and maidens"; once the dialogue has begun, the Youth asks his interlocutor, the Ancient: "Why not stay with us and enjoy life for once in a way? We will teach you to dance" (235-36). American dancer Raymond Duncan (1874-1966) and British dancer and choreographer Margaret Morris (1891-1980) both founded schools of dancing for young people (the former in Paris, the latter in London) based on ancient Greek models and emphasizing expressive movements rather than formal conventions.

15. The preface to *Back to Methuselah* contains Shaw's explanation of "creative evolution," a theory derived from Henri Bergson, which, in Shaw's version, proposed a disembodied, intelligent force realizing itself through the actions of human organisms. Shaw formed the theory in explicit opposition to the mechanistic explanations proposed by neo-Darwinians. Albert Einstein had been in the news recently following his London lectures on relativity; see TSE's "London Letter: July, 1921" (362).

The Metaphysical Poets[1]

By collecting these poems from the work of a generation more often named than read, and more often read than profitably studied, Professor Grierson has rendered a service of some importance.[2] Certainly the reader will meet with many poems already preserved in other anthologies, at the same time that he discovers poems such as those of Aurelian Townshend or Lord Herbert of Cherbury here included.[3] But the function of such an anthology as this is neither that of Professor Saintsbury's admirable edition of Caroline poets nor that of the *Oxford Book of English Verse*.[4] Mr. Grierson's book is in itself a piece of criticism, and a provocation of criticism; and we think that he was right in including so many poems of Donne, elsewhere (though not in many editions) accessible, as documents in the case of "metaphysical poetry." The phrase has long done duty as a term of abuse, or as the label of a quaint and pleasant taste. The question is to what extent the so-called metaphysicals formed a school (in our own time we should say a "movement"), and how far this so-called school or movement is a digression from the main current.

Not only is it extremely difficult to define metaphysical poetry, but difficult to decide what poets practise it and in which of their verses. The poetry of Donne (to whom Marvell and Bishop King are sometimes nearer than any of the other authors) is late Elizabethan, its feeling often very close to that of Chapman. The "courtly" poetry is derivative from Jonson, who borrowed liberally from the Latin; it expires in the next century with the sentiment and witticism of Prior.[5] There is finally the devotional verse of Herbert, Vaughan, and Crashaw (echoed long after by Christina Rossetti and Francis Thompson);[6] Crashaw, sometimes more profound and less sectarian than the others, has a quality which returns through the Elizabethan period to the early Italians.[7] It is difficult to find any precise use of metaphor, simile, or other conceit, which is common to all the poets and at the same time important enough as an element of style to isolate these poets as a group. Donne, and often Cowley, employ a device which is sometimes considered characteristically "metaphysical": the elaboration (contrasted with the condensation) of a figure of speech to the furthest stage to which ingenuity can carry it. Thus Cowley develops the commonplace comparison

of the world to a chess-board through long stanzas ("To Destiny"), and Donne, with more grace, in "A Valediction," the comparison of two lovers to a pair of compasses.[8] But elsewhere we find, instead of the mere explication of the content of a comparison, a development by rapid association of thought which requires considerable agility on the part of the reader.

> On a round ball
> A workeman that hath copies by, can lay
> An Europe, Afrique, and an Asia,
> And quickly make that, which was nothing, *All*,
> So doth each teare,
> Which thee doth weare,
> A globe, yea world by that impression grow,
> Till thy tears mixt with mine doe overflow
> This world, by waters sent from thee, my heaven dissolved so.[9]

Here we find at least two connexions which are not implicit in the first figure, but are forced upon it by the poet: from the geographer's globe to the tear, and the tear to the deluge. On the other hand, some of Donne's most successful and characteristic effects are secured by brief words and sudden contrasts:

> A bracelet of bright hair about the bone,[10]

where the most powerful effect is produced by the sudden contrast of associations of "bright hair" and of "bone." This telescoping of images and multiplied associations is characteristic of the phrase of some of the dramatists of the period which Donne knew: not to mention Shakespeare, it is frequent in Middleton, Webster, and Tourneur, and is one of the sources of the vitality of their language.

Johnson, who employed the term "metaphysical poets," apparently having Donne, Cleveland, and Cowley chiefly in mind, remarks of them that "the most heterogeneous ideas are yoked by violence together."[11] The force of this impeachment lies in the failure of the conjunction, the fact that often the ideas are yoked but not united; and if we are to judge of styles of poetry by their abuse, enough examples may be found in Cleveland to justify Johnson's condemnation. But a degree of heterogeneity of material compelled into unity by the operation of the poet's mind is omnipresent in poetry. We need not select for illustration such a line as:

> Notre âme est un trois-mâts cherchant son Icarie;[12]

we may find it in some of the best lines of Johnson himself (*The Vanity of Human Wishes*):

His fate was destined to a barren strand,
A petty fortress, and a dubious hand;
He left a name at which the world grew pale,
To point a moral, or adorn a tale.[13]

where the effect is due to a contrast of ideas, different in degree but the same in principle, as that which Johnson mildly reprehended. And in one of the finest poems of the age (a poem which could not have been written in any other age), the "Exequy" of Bishop King, the extended comparison is used with perfect success: the idea and the simile become one, in the passage in which the Bishop illustrates his impatience to see his dead wife, under the figure of a journey:

Stay for me there; I will not faile
To meet thee in that hollow Vale.
And think not much of my delay;
I am already on the way,
And follow thee with all the speed
Desire can make, or sorrows breed.
Each minute is a short degree,
And ev'ry houre a step towards thee.
At night when I betake to rest,
Next morn I rise nearer my West
Of life, almost by eight houres sail,
Than when sleep breath'd his drowsy gale . . . .
But heark! My Pulse, like a soft Drum
Beats my approach, tells *Thee* I come;
And slow howere my marches be,
I shall at last sit down by *Thee*.[14]

(In the last few lines there is that effect of terror which is several times attained by one of Bishop King's admirers, Edgar Poe).[15] Again, we may justly take these quatrains from Lord Herbert's Ode, stanzas which would, we think, be immediately pronounced to be of the metaphysical school:

So when from hence we shall be gone,
And be no more, nor you, nor I,

As one anothers mystery,
Each shall be both, yet both but one.

This said, in her up-lifted face,
Her eyes, which did that beauty crown,
Were like two starrs, that having faln down,
Look up again to find their place:

While such a moveless silent peace
Did seize on their becalmed sense,
One would have thought some influence
Their ravish'd spirits did possess.[16]

There is nothing in these lines (with the possible exception of the stars, a simile not at once grasped, but lovely and justified) which fits Johnson's general observations on the metaphysical poets in his essay on Cowley. A good deal resides in the richness of association which is at the same time borrowed from and given to the word "becalmed"; but the meaning is clear, the language simple and elegant. It is to be observed that the language of these poets is as a rule simple and pure; in the verse of George Herbert this simplicity is carried as far as it can go – a simplicity emulated without success by numerous modern poets. The *structure* of the sentences, on the other hand, is sometimes far from simple, but this is not a vice; it is a fidelity to thought and feeling. The effect, at its best, is far less artificial than that of an ode by Gray. And as this fidelity induces variety of thought and feeling, so it induces variety of music. We doubt whether, in the eighteenth century, could be found two poems in nominally the same metre, so dissimilar as Marvell's "Coy Mistress" and Crashaw's "Saint Teresa";[17] the one producing an effect of great speed by the use of short syllables, and the other an ecclesiastical solemnity by the use of long ones:

Love, thou art Absolute sole lord
Of Life & Death.[18]

If so shrewd and sensitive (though so limited) a critic as Johnson failed to define metaphysical poetry by its faults, it is worth while to inquire whether we may not have more success by adopting the opposite method: by assuming that the poets of the seventeenth century (up to the Revolution) were the direct and normal development of the precedent age; and, without prejudicing their case by the adjective "metaphysical," consider whether

their virtue was not something permanently valuable, which subsequently disappeared, but ought not to have disappeared. Johnson has hit, perhaps by accident, on one of their peculiarities, when he observes that "their attempts were always analytic"; he would not agree that, after the dissociation, they put the material together again in a new unity.[19]

It is certain that the dramatic verse of the later Elizabethan and early Jacobean poets expresses a degree of development of sensibility which is not found in any of the prose, good as it often is. If we except Marlowe, a man of prodigious intelligence, these dramatists were directly or indirectly (it is at least a tenable theory) affected by Montaigne.[20] Even if we except also Jonson and Chapman, these two were notably erudite, and were notably men who incorporated their erudition into their sensibility: their mode of feeling was directly and freshly altered by their reading and thought. In Chapman especially there is a direct sensuous apprehension of thought, or a recreation of thought into feeling, which is exactly what we find in Donne:

> in this one thing, all the discipline
> Of manners and of manhood is contained;
> A man to join himself with th' Universe
> In his main sway, and make in all things fit
> One with that All, and go on, round as it;
> Not plucking from the whole his wretched part,
> And into straits, or into nought revert,
> Wishing the complete Universe might be
> Subject to such a rag of it as he;
> But to consider great Necessity.[21]

We compare this with some modern passage:

> No, when the fight begins within himself,
> A man's worth something. God stoops o'er his head,
> Satan looks up between his feet – both tug –
> He's left, himself, i' the middle; the soul wakes
> And grows. Prolong that battle through his life![22]

It is perhaps somewhat less fair, though very tempting (as both poets are concerned with the perpetuation of love by offspring), to compare with the stanzas already quoted from Lord Herbert's Ode the following from Tennyson:

One walked between his wife and child,
With measured footfall firm and mild,
And now and then he gravely smiled.
The prudent partner of his blood
Leaned on him, faithful, gentle, good,
Wearing the rose of womanhood.
And in their double love secure,
The little maiden walked demure,
Pacing with downward eyelids pure.
These three made unity so sweet,
My frozen heart began to beat,
Remembering its ancient heat.[23]

The difference is not a simple difference of degree between poets. It is something which had happened to the mind of England between the time of Donne or Lord Herbert of Cherbury and the time of Tennyson and Browning; it is the difference between the intellectual poet and the reflective poet. Tennyson and Browning are poets, and they think; but they do not feel their thought as immediately as the odour of a rose. A thought to Donne was an experience; it modified his sensibility. When a poet's mind is perfectly equipped for its work, it is constantly amalgamating disparate experience; the ordinary man's experience is chaotic, irregular, fragmentary. The latter falls in love, or reads Spinoza, and these two experiences have nothing to do with each other, or with the noise of the typewriter or the smell of cooking; in the mind of the poet these experiences are always forming new wholes.

We may express the difference by the following theory: The poets of the seventeenth century, the successors of the dramatists of the sixteenth, possessed a mechanism of sensibility which could devour any kind of experience. They are simple, artificial, difficult, or fantastic, as their predecessors were; no less nor more than Dante, Guido Cavalcanti, Guinicelli, or Cino.[24†] In the seventeenth century a dissociation of sensibility set in, from which we have never recovered; and this dissociation, as is natural, was aggravated by the influence[25†] of the two most powerful poets of the century, Milton and Dryden. Each of these men performed certain poetic functions so magnificently well that the magnitude of the effect concealed the absence of others. The language went on and in some respects improved; the best verse of Collins, Gray, Johnson, and even Goldsmith satisfies some

of our fastidious demands better than that of Donne or Marvell or King. But while the language became more refined, the feeling became more crude. The feeling, the sensibility, expressed in the "Country Churchyard" (to say nothing of Tennyson and Browning) is cruder than that in the "Coy Mistress."

The second effect of the influence of Milton and Dryden followed from the first, and was therefore slow in manifestation. The sentimental age began early in the eighteenth century, and continued. The poets revolted against the ratiocinative, the descriptive; they thought and felt by fits, unbalanced; they reflected. In one or two passages of Shelley's *Triumph of Life*, in the second *Hyperion*, there are traces of a struggle toward unification of sensibility.[26] But Keats and Shelley died, and Tennyson and Browning ruminated.

After this brief exposition of a theory – too brief, perhaps, to carry conviction – we may ask, what would have been the fate of the "metaphysical" had the current of poetry descended in a direct line from them, as it descended in a direct line to them ? They would not, certainly, be classified as metaphysical. The possible interests of a poet are unlimited; the more intelligent he is the better; the more intelligent he is the more likely that he will have interests: our only condition is that he turn them into poetry, and not merely meditate on them poetically. A philosophical theory which has entered into poetry is established, for its truth or falsity in one sense ceases to matter, and its truth in another sense is proved. The poets in question have, like other poets, various faults. But they were, at best, engaged in the task of trying to find the verbal equivalent for states of mind and feeling. And this means both that they are more mature, and that they wear better, than later poets of certainly not less literary ability.

It is not a permanent necessity that poets should be interested in philosophy, or in any other subject. We can only say that it appears likely that poets in our civilization, as it exists at present, must be *difficult*. Our civilization comprehends great variety and complexity, and this variety and complexity, playing upon a refined sensibility, must produce various and complex results. The poet must become more and more comprehensive, more allusive, more indirect, in order to force, to dislocate if necessary, language into his meaning. (A brilliant and extreme statement of this view, with which it is not requisite to associate oneself, is that of M. Jean Epstein, *La Poésie d'aujourd-hui*.)[27] Hence we get something which looks very much like the conceit – we get, in fact, a method curiously similar to that of the "metaphysical poets," similar also in its use of obscure words and of simple phrasing.

Ô géraniums diaphanes, guerroyeurs sortilèges,
Sacrilèges monomanes!
Emballages, dévergondages, douches! Ô pressoirs
Des vendanges des grands soirs!
Layettes aux abois,
Thyrses au fond des bois!
Transfusions, représailles,
Relevailles, compresses et l'éternelle potion,
Angélus! n'en pouvoir plus
De débâcles nuptiales! de débâcles nuptiales![28]

The same poet could write also simply:

Elle est bien loin, elle pleure,
Le grand vent se lamente aussi . . .[29]

Jules Laforgue, and Tristan Corbière in many of his poems, are nearer to the "school of Donne" than any modern English poet. But poets more classical than they have the same essential quality of transmuting ideas into sensations, of transforming an observation into a state of mind.

Pour l'enfant, amoureux de cartes et d'estampes,
L'univers est égal à son vaste appétit.
Ah, que le monde est grand à la clarté des lampes!
Aux yeux du souvenir que le monde est petit![30]

In French literature the great master of the seventeenth century – Racine – and the great master of the nineteenth – Baudelaire – are in some ways more like each other than they are like anyone else.[31†] The greatest two masters of diction are also the greatest two psychologists, the most curious explorers of the soul. It is interesting to speculate whether it is not a misfortune that two of the greatest masters of diction in our language, Milton and Dryden, triumph with a dazzling disregard of the soul. If we continued to produce Miltons and Drydens it might not so much matter, but as things are it is a pity that English poetry has remained so incomplete. Those who object to the "artificiality" of Milton or Dryden sometimes tell us to "look into our hearts and write."[32] But that is not looking deep enough; Racine or Donne looked into a good deal more than the heart. One must look into the cerebral cortex, the nervous system, and the digestive tracts.

May we not conclude, then, that Donne, Crashaw, Vaughan, Herbert and Lord Herbert, Marvell, King, Cowley at his best, are in the direct current of English poetry, and that their faults should be reprimanded by this standard rather than coddled by antiquarian affection? They have been enough praised in terms which are implicit limitations because they are "metaphysical" or "witty," "quaint" or "obscure," though at their best they have not these attributes more than other serious poets. On the other hand, we must not reject the criticism of Johnson (a dangerous person to disagree with) without having mastered it, without having assimilated the Johnsonian canons of taste. In reading the celebrated passage in his essay on Cowley we must remember that by wit he clearly means something more serious than we usually mean to-day; in his criticism of their versification we must remember in what a narrow discipline he was trained, but also how well trained; we must remember that Johnson tortures chiefly the chief offenders, Cowley and Cleveland. It would be a fruitful work, and one requiring a substantial book, to break up the classification of Johnson (for there has been none since) and exhibit these poets in all their difference of kind and of degree, from the massive music of Donne to the faint, pleasing tinkle of Aurelian Townshend – whose "Dialogue between a Pilgrim and Time" is one of the few regrettable omissions from the excellent anthology of Professor Grierson.[33†]

NOTES

1. As printed in *SE*; originally published in *TLS*, 1031 (20 Oct 1921), 669-70, a review of *Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems of the Seventeenth Century: Donne to Butler*, ed. Herbert J. C. Grierson (Oxford: Clarendon, 1921). Pp. lviii + 244; rpt. by the Hogarth Press as the second of three essays in *Homage to John Dryden* (1924). TSE wrote to Richard Aldington on 16 Sept that he had "just finished" the *TLS* article: "The only point made is that the metaphysicals are not, as a group, metaphysical at all, but a perfectly direct and normal development. . . . They are quaint because we are unused to the intellectual quality in verse" (*L1* 581-82).

2. The first book by Sir Herbert J. C. Grierson (1866-1960) was *The First Half of the Seventeenth Century* (1906) in the "Periods in European Literature" series by George Saintsbury, whom he succeeded as professor of English at Edinburgh University in 1915. He contributed the essay on Donne for the *Cambridge History of English Literature* (1909) and edited the authoritative *Poems of John Donne* (2 vols, 1912).

3. Aurelian Townshend (ca. 1583-1649) and Edward Herbert, first Baron of Cherbury (ca. 1582-1648), eldest brother of George Herbert. Grierson includes Townshend's "Loves Victory" and "Upon kinde and true Love" and Herbert's "Elegy over a Tomb" and "An Ode upon a Question moved, whether Love should continue for ever?"

4. The third volume of George Saintsbury's *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period* was published in Sept 1921; Quiller-Couch's *Oxford Book of Modern Verse* was published in 1900.

5. Poet and diplomat Matthew Prior (1664-1721) was author of the successful collection *Poems on Several Occasions* (1718).

6. TSE had included Christina Rossetti and Francis Thompson (1859-1907), along with Lionel Johnson, in the category "Poets of Religious Faith" in his 1917 Extension Lectures (1.587).

7. Richard Crashaw (ca. 1612-48), author of *Steps to the Temple: Sacred Poems, with other Delights of the Muses* (1646)

8. Cowley, "Destinie," in *Poems* (1656), and Donne, "A Valediction: forbidding mourning" (1633); both in Grierson, 195, 14.

9. Donne, "A Valediction: of weeping" (1633), ll. 10-18; in Grierson, 11.

10. From "The Relique" (1633), as printed in TSE's Muses Library edition of Donne's *Poems*, ed. E. K. Chambers (London: Lawrence & Bullen, 1896); in Grierson, 21. TSE echoes Donne in "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock": "Arms that are braceleted and white and bare / [But in the lamplight, downed with light brown hair!]" (*CPP* 5). He commented on other qualities of the lines in "Reflections on Contemporary Poetry, I," (1.574).

11. Samuel Johnson, "Life of Cowley," *Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets* (London: Frederick Warne, 1872), 9.

12. *Trans*: "Our soul is a three-masted ship searching for its Icaria." Baudelaire, "Le Voyage" (line 33), in the second edition (1861) of *Les Fleurs du mal*.

13. *Read*: "His fall was destin'd," "He left the name"; from *The Vanity of Human Wishes: The Tenth Satire of Juvenal Imitated* (1749), ll. 219-22.

14. "An Exequy To his Matchlesse never to be forgotten Friend," ll. 89-100, 111-14, by Henry King; in Grierson as "The Exequy," 203-06. In his copy of Saintsbury's *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period*, vol 3 (signed and dated 1921), TSE has marked lines 80-99 of this poem with a bracket in the margin (197); his quotation here follows Grierson's spelling, however. He wrote to Richard Aldington in Nov 1922: "Have you studied with any care Bishop King in Saintsbury's collection? He seems to me one of the finest and I have long desired to write a short paper about him" (*L1* 787).

15. Poe appends lines 89-90 ("Stay for me . . . that hollow Vale.") as an epigraph to "The Assignation" (1845; first as "The Visionary," 1834); he quotes ll. 111-14 ("But heark! . . . by *Thee*") twice in two articles on Longfellow published in the *Broadway Journal* in 1845. In a later radio broadcast, TSE recalled his early discovery of the lines from King's poem while reading Poe's story: "These two lines so took me that I could not rest until I had found and read the poem entire. I get as keen a thrill today from this poem as did the boy who read it so many years ago." "Personal Choice," unpublished BBC broadcast, recorded 30 Dec 1957, broadcast 9 Jan 1958, Home Service (BBC Written Archives, Caversham).

16. The last three stanzas of "An Ode upon a Question moved, whether Love should continue for ever?" (1665); in Grierson, 33.

17. Marvell, "To his Coy Mistress"; Richard Crashaw, "A Hymn to the Name and Honour of the Admirable Saint Teresa" (1646); in Grierson, 73-74, 137-42.

18. The first two lines of Crashaw's "A Hymn to the Name and Honour of the Admirable Saint Teresa"; in Grierson, 137.

19. From Johnson's "Life of Cowley": "Their attempts were always analytic; they broke every image into fragments." In his edition of the *Lives* (London: Frederick Warne, 1872), TSE put a

question mark next to the paragraph in which this line appears, and he underlined the word "sublime" in the sentence that begins it: "Nor was the sublime more within their reach than the pathetic; for they never attempted that comprehension and expanse of thought which at once fills the whole mind" (9).

20. TSE referred to this well-known claim (with particular attention to Shakespeare) at the end of "Hamlet" (26), and he had read *Montaigne and Shakspere* by J. M. Robertson, who discusses at length the Elizabethan dramatists' debt to Florio's 1603 translation.

21. Chapman, *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois*, IV.i.137-46.

22. Robert Browning, "Bishop Blougram's Apology," in *Men and Women* (1855), ll. 693-97.

23. Tennyson, "The Two Voices," in *Poems* (1842), ll. 412-23.

24†. In *TLS* and *HJD*: "Guinizelli"

Medieval Italian poets associated with Dante and the *dolce stil novo* [sweet new style].

25†. In *TLS* and *HJD*: "was due to the influence"

26. TSE wrote to Richard Aldington on 6 July: "any innuendos I make at the expense of Milton, Keats, Shelley and the nineteenth century in general are part of a plan to help us rectify, so far as *I* can, the immense skew in public opinion toward our pantheon of literature" (*L1* 570).

27. Jean Epstein (1897-1953), avant-garde filmmaker and literary critic, argues in *La Poésie d'aujourd'hui, un nouvel état d'intelligence* [The Poetry of Today: A New State of Intelligence] (Paris: Éditions de la sirène, 1921) that modern literature must avoid simplicity and, instead, demand "un travail intellectuel" [an intellectual labor] for both author and reader (57). TSE borrowed the book from Aldington and was reading it in early Sept 1921: "The Epstein book is most interesting; I disagree with some important inclusions, but it is a formidable work to attack, and therefore very tonic" (*L1* 580).

28. *Trans*: "Diaphanous geraniums, warlike spells, / Monomaniac sacrileges! / Wrappings, debauchery, showers! Oh! wine-press / Of parties' harvesting! / Layettes at bay, / Thyrsés deep in the woods! / Transfusions, reprisals, / Churchings, bandages and the eternal potion. / Angelus! Ah! to be exhausted / From these nuptial stampedes! these nuptial stampedes!" Jules Laforgue, from the beginning of poem X (originally published as "Les Amours") in *Derniers Vers* (1890). *The Last Poems of Jules Laforgue*, trans. Madeleine Betts (Elms Court: Arthur H. Stockwell, 1973), 35. TSE wrote to John Collier on 4 Oct 1923: "Incidentally, Laforgue has made it impossible for anyone else to talk about geraniums" (*L2* 241).

29. *Trans*: "She is far away, she is crying; / The great wind is also lamenting." "Sur une défunte" [On a Dead Woman]. *Last Poems of Jules Laforgue*, trans. Betts.

30. *Trans*: For the child, in love with maps and prints, / The universe is equal to his great appetite. / Ah, how the world is immense by the clarity of lamps! / In the eyes of memory, how the world is small! Charles Baudelaire, "Le Voyage," ll. 1-4.

31†. In *TLS* and *HJD*: "are more like each other"

32. A paraphrase of Sidney's injunction at the end of the first sonnet in *Astrophel and Stella*: "'Fool,' said my Muse to me, 'look in thy heart and write!'"

33†. In *TLS* and *HJD*: "from this excellent anthology."

TSE may have read Townshend's "A Dialogue betwixt Time and a Pilgrime" in *Aurelian Townshend's Poems and Masks*, ed. by E. K. Chambers (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912); he marked only this poem in the reprint edition (1923) that he inscribed and gave to Virginia Woolf in Dec 1923 (Berg).

The Metaphysical Poets

To the Editor of the *TLS*

Times Literary Supplement, 1033 (3 Nov 1921) 716

Sir, – I am obliged to Professor Saintsbury for his suggestions, of which I shall make use, if he will permit me, on some later occasion.[1] As I greatly respect Mr. Saintsbury, so I would not be behind him in my testimony of that great neglected poet, great neglected dramatist, and great neglected critic, John Dryden.

I only regret that the conclusion to be drawn from Mr. Saintsbury's letter appears to contradict my own conclusions from the study of Caroline verse. Mr. Saintsbury appears to believe that these poets represent not merely a generation, but almost a particular theory of poetry. The "second thoughts" to which he alludes are, I think, and as I tried to point out, frequent in the work of many other poets besides, of other times and other languages. I have mentioned Chapman, and the contemporaries of Dante. I do not believe that the author of *Hamlet* and *Measure for Measure* was invariably satisfied with "the first simple, obvious, natural thought and expression of thought"; or that the author of the "Phoenix and Turtle" whistled as he went for want of thought.[2] Nor can I believe that Swinburne thought twice, or even *once*, before he wrote

> Time with a gift of tears,
> Grief with a glass that ran.[3]

On the subject of Caroline poetry, there is no one to whom so much gratitude is due, or to whom I should listen with as much deference, as Mr. Saintsbury.[4]

I am, Sir, your obliged humble

CONTRIBUTOR

NOTES

1. Composed while TSE was in Margate at the beginning of his three-month leave from Lloyds Bank. TSE responds to George Saintsbury's letter (27 Oct) proposing an amicable "annotation – not in the least critical" to "The Metaphysical Poets" (375). Saintsbury advocates

following Dryden in considering the term "metaphysical" equivalent to "'second thoughts,' things that come *after* the natural first." "No matter what they are dealing with," he continues, metaphysical poets "always 'go behind' the first, simple, obvious, natural thought and expression of thought" (698). In his subsequent rejoinder (10 Nov) to the present letter, Saintsbury clarified: "all true poetry must be in a way second thought. . . . What I was endeavoring to point out was that, *in this period*, the quest of the second thought became direct, deliberate, a business, almost itself a *first* thought" (734).

2. Shakespeare, "The Phoenix and the Turtle" (1601). TSE borrows a phrase from Dryden's *Cymon and Iphigenia, from Boccace* (1700), ll. 84-85: "He trudg'd along unknowing what he sought, / And whistled as he went, for want of Thought." Identified by Christopher Ricks, *Decisions and Revisions in T. S. Eliot* (London: The British Library, 2003), 3.

3. *Read*: "Time, with" and "Grief, with"; from Swinburne's *Atalanta in Calydon* (ll. 316-17). Saintsbury used these lines (quoted identically) and their deliberate inversion of conventional metaphors to suggest that Swinburne was "'right metaphysical' in his method." In his subsequent letter, he admitted that "the Swinburnian illustration was perhaps capable of misconstruction." TSE had drawn attention to the same lines in "Swinburne as Poet" (184).

4. TSE owned and admired Saintsbury's *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period* (3 vols, 1905-21), and he inscribed a copy of *HJD* to Saintsbury: "Homage to / George Saintsbury / from his Sincere admirer / T. S. Eliot / 13.xi.24"

Poets and Anthologies

To the Editor of the *TLS*

Times Literary Supplement, 1036 (24 Nov 1921) 771

Sir, – In your last issue I have read a review of an anthology of *Modern American Poetry*; from this review I gather that certain of my verses appear therein.[1] I should be grateful to you if you would make public the fact that I had no knowledge that any of my verse was to be used in this way; that I was not consulted in the choice; and that, in short, the whole production is a surprise to me.[2]

This statement in itself may interest but few of your readers. But I should like to remark that I should have much preferred *not* being included in this anthology. On previous occasions, when compilers of such works have asked my consent, there have always been personal reasons for my willing compliance: here there would have been none.

Some months ago I discussed the general question of anthologies with a poet (of a very different school and tradition from mine) whose name is much more widely known than mine is. We agreed that the work of any poet who has already published a book of verse is likely to be more damaged than aided by anthologies. I hope that other writers may be encouraged to express their opinions.[3]

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Lausanne T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. In "Young American Poets" (17 Nov 1921), Richard Aldington anonymously reviewed Louis Untermeyer's *Modern American Poetry* (1921), the revised and enlarged edition of his *Modern American Poetry: An Introduction* (1919). The new edition included TSE's "Morning at the Window," the second stanza of "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (ll. 15-22), and part I of "Preludes" (titled simply "Prelude" in the anthology).

2. On 25 Dec 1921, TSE wrote to Alfred A. Knopf, publisher of the American edition of *Poems* (1920), to inquire "whether this use of my verse had had *your* approval": "I had assumed . . . that I should be informally, at least, notified when any of my verse was to be used" (*L1* 619). Two months later he asked Aldington how to join London's Society of Authors "and whether they wd. do anything for me about the piracy in the Untermeyer book" (*L1* 637).

3. Robert Graves wrote to the editor on 1 Dec to "commend Mr. T. S. Eliot's courageous letter": "A poet's capacities cannot in any sense be measured by one or two 'anthology pieces'" (789). Among other replies was that of John Haines (15 Dec), who objected: "I bought Mr. T. S. Eliot's *Prufrock* entirely on account of the poems from it contained in *Catholic Anthology*" (844).

The Three Provincialities[1]

The Tyro: A Review of the Arts of Painting, Sculpture, and Design, 2 (Spring 1922) 11-13

It has been perceptible for several years that not one but three English literatures exist: that written by Irishmen, that written by Americans and that composed by the English themselves. Thirty years ago Irish and English literature were in a state of partial amalgamation. That is to say, the literary movement in England was very largely sustained by Irishmen; for some years, otherwise on the whole rather barren years, the depleted English ranks were filled by Irishmen. English literature lacked the vitality to assimilate this foreign matter; and, more recently, in accord with political tendencies, Irish writers (mostly of minor importance) have reassembled in Dublin.[2] There remain, as a permanent part of English literature, some of the poetry of Yeats, and more doubtfully the plays of Synge (probably too local for permanence). As for the future, it may be predicted that the work of Mr. Joyce should arrest the separate Irish current, for the reason that it is the first Irish work since that of Swift to possess absolute European significance. Mr. Joyce has used what is racial and national and transmuted it into something of international value; so that future Irish writers, measured by the standard he has given, must choose either to pursue the same ideal or to confess that they write solely for an Irish, not for a European public. No more comic peasants, epic heroes, banshees, little people, Deirdres;[3] Mr. Joyce has shown them up. Mr. James Stephens (I think it was) in a recent number of the *Outlook* advocated that Irish writers should return to the Irish language.[4] In that case, there will be no further need to discuss Irish literature at all.

American literature, in contrast to Irish, has not yet received this death blow from a native hand. Owing to the fact that America possesses a much greater number (even making full allowance for the difference of population) of able second order writers than England, its "national literature" is extremely flourishing. If it has produced nothing of European importance it nevertheless counts a considerable number of intelligent writers; has several literary critics more alert and open-minded than any of their generation in this country; and some of its poets and novelists at least admire respectable ideals, and tend towards the light. The advance of "American

literature" has been accelerated by the complete collapse of literary effort in England. One may even say that the present situation here has now become a scandal impossible to conceal from foreign nations; that literature is chiefly in the hands of persons who may be interested in almost anything else; that literature presents the appearance of a garden unmulched, untrimmed, unweeded, and choked by vegetation sprung only from the chance germination of the seed of last year's plants.

It is a sign of the poverty and blindness of our criticism that in all three countries a mistaken attitude toward nationality has unconsciously arisen or has been consciously adopted. The point is this: literature is not primarily a matter of nationality, but of language; the traditions of the language, not the traditions of the nation or the race, are what first concern the writer. The Irish radicals are commendable in so far as they mark the necessity for a choice. Ireland must either employ a language of its own or submit to international standards. It is immaterial, from my point of view, whether English literature be written in London, in New York, in Dublin, in Indianapolis, or in Trieste. In fifty years time it may all make its appearance in Paris or in New York. But so far as it is literature of the first order, not merely an entertaining sideshow, it will be English literature. Should America in time develop a superior language (as Ireland may try to revert to a more barbarous one) there would be a separate American literature – contingent, probably, upon the disappearance or sufficient degeneration of the English language in England.

Every literature has two sides; it has that which is essential to it as literature, which can be appreciated by everyone with adequate knowledge of the language, and on the other hand it has that which can only be enjoyed by a particular group of people inhabiting a particular portion of the earth. As in the end *adequate* knowledge of the language means *complete* knowledge, and as *no* person can ever have the opportunity to acquire complete knowledge of any language but his own, it is easy to confuse the two appreciations. For those who have the best opportunity for knowing the language are precisely this particular group in a particular portion of the earth. The critic is the person who has the power to distinguish between the two points of view in himself; and to discern what, in any work of literary art, takes its place, through its expression of the genius of its own language, in European literature, and what is of purely local importance. (In the case of such a writer as Dickens, for example, this dissociation remains to be performed.)

English literature at the present time suffers as much, I think, as that written in America, from this pleasant provinciality. (How much contemporary verse, for instance, appeals rather to the Englishman's love of English rustic scenery than to a universal perception of Nature, such as Wordsworth *rarely* attained.) And how tardy, and still how deficient, has been the English appreciation of one of the greatest and least local: Edgar Poe. The lesson of language, therefore, is one to be learned on both sides of the Atlantic. (The statement of this fact places the author, as M. Cocteau might say, in the position of Calchas in *Troilus and Cressida*.)[5] Whatever words a writer employs, he benefits by knowing as much as possible of the history of these words, of the *uses to which they have already been applied*. Such knowledge facilitates his task of giving to the word a new life and to the language a new idiom. The essential of tradition is in this; in getting as much as possible of the whole weight of the history of the language behind his word. Not every good writer need be conscious of this – I do not know to what extent Mr. Wyndham Lewis has studied Elizabethan prose – Mr. Joyce at least has not only the tradition but the consciousness of it. The best writers will always produce work which will not be American or Irish or English, but which will take its predestined place in "English literature." It is a pity, however, that the second-best writers, for want of a little critical breadth of view, should insist, out of national vanity or mere unconscious complacency, on what will render them only completely insupportable to posterity. The British writer, who shrinks from working overtime or at weekends, will not find these ideas congenial. Nor, for other reasons, will all American critics.[6]

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. As printed in the second and final issue of Wyndham Lewis's *The Tyro*, which appeared in Mar 1922. For TSE's two contributions to the first issue a year before, see "The Romantic Englishman, the Comic Spirit, and the Function of Criticism" and "The Lesson of Baudelaire" (302, 306).

2. Despite the signing of the Anglo-Irish treaty in Dec 1921 and the establishment of Ireland's Provisional Government and the Irish National Army in Jan 1922, escalating violence between members of the nationalist Irish Republican Army and the Royal Irish Constabulary would erupt into full-fledged civil war in June 1922. Among the writers assembling in Dublin in recent years were James Stephens (who had returned there from Paris in 1915), Lennox Robinson (who helped Yeats and Stephens form the Dublin Drama League in 1918), Sean O'Casey, and Pádraic Ó Conaire.

3. All figures from Irish myth and legend – including the pre-Christian Ulster Cycle, from which the heroine Deirdre derives – that appeared frequently in the literature of the late-

nineteenth-century Celtic Revival, which TSE had taught and assigned papers on during his 1917 Extension course (1.591).

4. In "Ireland Returning to her Fountains," Stephens advocated the imminent "return of Ireland to her natural language" and "the almost total disappearance of Irish literature in the English tongue." *The Outlook*, 49 (7 Jan 1922), 12. Stephens's essay appeared adjacent to "The Poetry of T. S. Eliot" by Richard Aldington (12-13).

5. In his *La Noce massacrée (Souvenirs): 1. Visites à Maurice Barrès* (Paris: La Sirène, 1921), French playwright and poet Jean Cocteau (1889-1963) writes that Shakespeare's Calchas occupies "one of the finest positions": "He goes over to the Greeks through a love of justice. From the top of their walls the Trojans look down on the traitor, while the Greeks suspect him as a spy. It is impossible to feel more alone in the world than this." Rpt. in *A Call to Order*, trans. Rollo H. Myers (London: Faber and Gwyer, 1926), 97.

6. Editor F. W. Bateson obtained Lewis's permission to reprint this essay in the inaugural issue of *Essays in Criticism* (Jan 1951) 38-41, where it was followed by TSE's "Postscript," dated 1950: "I had completely forgotten 'The Three Provincialities,' and re-read it, as I re-read any prose piece that I wrote many years ago, with a good deal of misgiving and apprehension. Its republication does not embarrass me, however, so much as I expected. I seem to have made a rash prediction about the influence of Joyce; and when I find that I said that America at the time at which I was writing possessed a much greater number of able second-order writers than England, I now wonder what writers I could have been thinking of. The author of 'The Three Provincialities' appears to have been unduly sanguine about the prospects of American literature, and perhaps a little more pessimistic about England than was, at that moment, strictly justified. I am glad to find him asserting that literature is not primarily a matter of nationality but of language; and that true literature has in it something which can be appreciated by intelligent foreigners who have a reading knowledge of the language, and also something which can only be understood by the particular people living in the same place as the author. I am also glad to find the affirmation, that it is a good thing for a writer to take an interest in the history of the words that he uses. I detect a slightly aggressive tone which now gives a mild amusement; and I cannot regard the article as a whole as anything but a very small literary curio" (41).

London Letter: April, 1922[1]

The Dial, 72 (May 1922) 510-13

London, after three months, appeared to me quite unchanged: the same things one liked, the same things one detested, and the same things to which one was indifferent.[2] I set about to hear any important news, of books, of people, of productions or events, and found nothing worthy of mention. This, of course, might happen anywhere. Nevertheless, after a separation, one is disposed to generalize about impressions; so I have been led to contemplate, for many moments, the nature of the particular torpor or deadness which strikes a denizen of London on his return.

There is certainly, in the atmosphere of literary London, something which may provisionally be called a moral cowardice. It is not simply cowardice, but a caution, a sort of worldly prudence which believes implicitly that English literature is so good as it is that adventure and experiment involve only unjustified risk; lack of ambition, laziness, and refusal to recognize foreign competition; a tolerance which is no better than torpid indifference; not cowardice merely, but still a composition of inertias which is usually to be found in general cowardice. It is facilitated by conditions which are universal as well, by democracy (in the vague habitual sense of the word), by the newspapers, the reviewing of books, the journalistic life; by the actual and by every proposed economic system, which give so high a place to Security – whether in the form of gilt-edged bonds or old-age pensions – and so low a place to adventure and contemplation. But in London these poisons are either more pernicious, or their effects more manifest, than elsewhere. Other cities decay, and extend a rich odour of putrefaction; London merely shrivels, like a little bookkeeper grown old.

This is the principal impression one derives from the consideration of any and every anthology of contemporary verse that appears. As the two last that I have seen are Methuen and Company's *Anthology of Modern Verse*, and Mr. Untermeyer's *Modern American Poetry*, I fall upon these as text-books for a comparison.[3] With the merits of the anthologies I have nothing to do; only with a general impression of English and American poetry. It is very difficult, so different have the verses of the two sides of the Atlantic become, to censure the one without appearing to favour the other;

nevertheless, this nice feat should be attempted. Both appear to me to insult the English language, but in different ways; both appear to me conventional and timid, but in different ways.

The instinct for safety it may be – as in the bird the ostrich, not always a safe instinct – or a complexity of causes, which seems to make the English poet take refuge in just those sentiments, images, and thoughts which render a man least distinguishable from the mob, the respectable mob, the decent middle-class mob. An appearance of daring, even a real daring in non-literary respects (for political courage is still respected) may do no harm, and may even please; for it makes the reader feel that he is daring too. But a truly independent way of looking at things, a point of view which cannot be sorted under any known religious or political title; in fact, the having the only thing which gives a work pretending to literary art its justification; the having something which the public have not got: this is always detested. Sometimes it is not recognized, sometimes it can be ignored; and then a man may have a deserved immediate popularity; but when it is recognized and cannot be ignored, it is certainly feared and disliked. The popularity of certain war poems was due, I think, to the fact that they appeared to represent a revolt against something that was very unpleasant, and really paid a tribute to all the nicest feelings of the upper-middle class British public school boy. But if I had to pick out, from the Methuen anthology, some poem which more than the rest contained a dignity of the individual, it would be, I think, Lionel Johnson's "Statue of King Charles."[4] Johnson, however, is hardly to be claimed by the present literary generation.

We have, then, a large number of writers giving the public what it likes; and a large body of reviewers telling it that it is right to like what it likes; and the *Morning Post* to tell it that everything new is a symptom of Bolshevism; and the *London Mercury* to tell it that it is already such an enlightened public that what it does not like cannot be really good.[5] I do not say that a more intelligent journalism would produce better poets; it is a part of the situation, this unintelligent press; a part of the so-called modern democracy which appears to produce fewer and fewer individuals. I mean that some of the same causes that make American poetry what it is have contributed to make English poetry what it is, only the result in the two environments is very different. The English language is of course badly written in both countries. In England it is not ungrammatical, but common; it is not in bad taste, but rather tasteless. English imposes less upon the writer

than French, but demands more from him. It demands greater and more constant variation; every word must be charged afresh with energy every time it is used; the language demands an *animosity* which is singularly deficient in those authors who are most publicly glorified for their style.

The lack of any moral integrity, which I think is behind all the superficial imbecilities of contemporary English verse (imbecilities which an American public is quite able to see for itself) is disguised in various ways; the disguise often takes the form of noble thoughts, and (in serious prose writers also) in an endless pomposity. It is the mark of the man who has no core, no individual moral existence, to be possessed with moral notions, to be goaded by the necessity of continual moral formulations. In this he finds repose. Writers often start out hopefully, apparently to look out something for themselves, but the strain is too great; they relapse into the preacher or the prophet. I observe that Mr. Clive Bell, who used to divert the readers of *The New Republic* with his pranks, is lately fallen into this cathedral manner in addressing the American public; and I hope that he will not let the practice grow upon him.[6]

I know that the word "moral," which I have used so often, will give offence. Well, I have lately perused selections from some of the American poets, in Mr. Untermeyer's anthology, and I think that the word can be applied here too. Perhaps it is not a representative anthology; certainly I fail to find one or two of the writers who interest me most. At any rate it contains the most noted; and in several of them I seem to find exactly the same weakness as in the English. It does not matter whether they are crude or experimental; I do not find them either so crude or so experimental as they are said to be. I am told that Mr. Sandburg is now the great American representative poet. Some of his smaller verse is charming; but appears to be rather an echo of Mr. Pound, who has done it better.[7] In his more ambitious verse, however, there is just the same surrender as in England, to what the people want. You must talk about America, just as here you must talk about England: only, there are different things to say. It is necessary to pretend that England is a green and pleasant land; at present, you need not say that America is pleasant, you can make it infernal; but you must make out that it is big, that it is new, that it contains the germs of a colossal growth. And beneath this there is commonplace and conventionality. Mr. Sandburg may blame the anthology, but there it is. The same is true of Mr. Lindsay, whose verse has no moral significance; and that of Mr. Masters, whose verse has not enough; and Miss Lowell appears to have nothing that she has

not borrowed from Mr. Pound or from Mr. Fletcher. Mr. Frost seems the nearest equivalent to an English poet, specializing in New England torpor; his verse, it is regretfully said, is uninteresting, and what is uninteresting is unreadable, and what is unreadable is not read. There, that is done.

I know that if I lived in closer proximity to Mr. Burleson, and to Professor Sherman, and to the Methodist Episcopal Church, I should probably take a different tone.[8] But if people will admire Whitman for the *wrong* things . . .

This should have been a London letter. But *Ulysses* does not exactly tumble into it; and must certainly be discussed apart; time enough to include it here when we are able to mark its effect upon London.[9] (*The London Mercury* has already devoted three pages to Mr. Joyce; perhaps London will be revolutionized in three months.)[10] Wyndham Lewis' art review, the *Tyro*, has only just now appeared.[11]

In Paris I had the first and most welcome reminder of London in seeing Mistinguette at the Casino de Paris.[12] She has other *rôles* which no English actress could possibly fill; she is versatile; but in herself she played a part which I thought would have been better understood and liked by an English music hall audience than it was at the Casino de Paris. I thought of Marie Lloyd again; and wondered again why that directness, frankness, and ferocious humour which survive in her, and in Nellie Wallace and George Robey and a few others, should be extinct, should be odious to the British public, in precisely those forms of art in which they are most needed, and in which, in fact, they used to flourish.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Composed circa 17 Feb, when TSE mentions working on it to Aldington (*L1* 636). On 16 Mar, he told Thayer, while the two were negotiating the publication of *The Waste Land* in the *Dial*, that he had sent "one or two alterations" to bring the letter up to date (*L1* 652). This was the fifth of TSE's eight regular "London Letters" for the *Dial*, each bearing the date below the title.

2. This was TSE's first "Letter" for the *Dial* since Oct 1921, when he left London from 15 Oct to 12 Jan 1922 to stay in Margate and then in Lausanne, Switzerland. Editor Scofield Thayer wrote to TSE on 29 Jan 1922 after rejecting a substitute "London Letter" by St. John Hutchinson, whom TSE had recommended in his stead: "You are *The Dial*'s favorite foreign correspondent . . . Write about what you damn well please" (*L1* 632).

3. *An Anthology of Modern Verse*, chosen by Algernon Methuen (London: Methuen & Co., 1921). For TSE's response to Untermeyer's anthology (1921), which reprinted excerpts from his poems without his consent, see "Poets and Anthologies" (388).

4. Lionel Johnson's "By the Statue of King Charles at Charing Cross" first appeared in his *Poems* (1895).

5. The conservative daily London paper *The Morning Post* had become infamous for its controversial series of anti-Semitic articles in 1920 and for the frequent condemnations of Bolshevism and communist politics that were spearheaded by editor H. A. Gwynne. Ezra Pound wrote to TSE on 14 Mar that it was "the real voice of England, and the most concentrated and persistent will toward evil in Europe" (*L1* 647).

6. Essays by Bloomsbury art critic Clive Bell (1881-1964), whose "affectation of superiority" TSE earlier referred to as a "conjuring trick" (*L1* 453), had been appearing regularly in the American periodical *The New Republic* since 1919. In his recent "Plus de Jazz" (21 Sept 1921), Bell labeled TSE's *Ara Vos Prec* "primly insolent" and upbraided other jazz-inspired artists for their contempt of seriousness, concluding: "thought rather than spirits is required . . . dignity rather than impudence, and lucidity above all things" (96).

7. Untermeyer included eight poems by Carl Sandburg and five by Pound in *Modern American Poetry*.

8. Albert Sidney Burleson (1863-1937), United States Postmaster General from 1913 to 1921 and infamous for his rigid censorship policies, was in charge when postal authorities refused to distribute copies of the *Little Review* containing episodes of "Ulysses" in June 1919. Stuart Pratt Sherman (1881-1926) was professor at the University of Illinois and co-editor of *A History of American Literature*, which TSE reviewed (21); Sherman contributed the introduction to the Modern Student's Library edition of *Leaves of Grass* (1922), in which he praises Whitman's union of individualism and cosmopolitanism. The Wesleyan Methodist Church, which officially broke from the Church of England in 1791, was known as the Methodist Episcopal Church in America.

9. TSE had recently met with Joyce in Paris, where Pound arranged a dinner with them and American publisher Horace Liveright to discuss the publication of *Ulysses* and *The Waste Land*. Shakespeare and Company issued the first bound copies of Joyce's novel in Paris on 2 Feb. The first British reviews of *Ulysses* appeared in late Mar (*Daily Express*) and Apr (*Evening News*, *Nation & Athenaeum*), after TSE sent to the *Dial* his revisions to the present essay.

10. J. M. Hone, "A Letter from Ireland," *London Mercury* (Jan 1922), 306-08.

11. *The Tyro*, no. 2, appeared in Mar 1922 and featured TSE's "The Three Provincialities" (390); this statement was likely among the "alterations" that TSE sent to the *Dial* in Mar.

12. On his way back to London from Lausanne, TSE stopped in Paris from 2 to 11 Jan, where he saw popular performer Mistinguett (Jeanne-Marie Bourgeois, 1875-1956) in the revue *Paris en l'air*, which had been playing since 29 Oct 1921 to full houses at the eighteenth-century music hall, the Casino de Paris (see illustration 22).

Lettre d'Angleterre[1]

La Nouvelle Revue française, 18 (1 May 1922) 617-24

Comme préambule à un examen de l'état de la littérature anglaise à l'heure présente, il est nécessaire de hasarder quelques généralisations, – d'exposer avec franchise un point de vue – inévitablement contestable en soi – afin que le lecteur puisse se rendre compte du degré de confiance qu'il convient d'accorder au chroniqueur, ainsi que des limites et des préjugés qui lui sont personnels. Lorsqu'il s'agit de discuter *le présent* il ne suffit pas d'avoir du jugement et du goût ; il faut posséder aussi une foi et une faculté de prévision qui varient avec chaque individu. Car le présent se compose de beaucoup de passé et d'un peu d'avenir ; il renferme une majorité de gens qui ne sont que l'écho du passé, et un très petit nombre d'écrivains qui représenteront notre époque dans cinquante ans, mais qui aujourd'hui constituent plutôt une portion de l'avenir. Si l'on veut donc donner une vue équitable de la situation présente, – telle qu'elle apparaît à un contemporain, – il est nécessaire de commencer par la partie la plus ingrate du sujet, je veux dire par le vaste arrière-plan de mort sur lequel se détachent les figures solitaires de l'avenir ; il est nécessaire de partir du procès d'Oscar Wilde.

Devant un auditoire étranger on ne saurait trop souligner l'effet qu'exerça ce procès sur la situation littéraire en Angleterre. En pleine société victorienne un petit groupe d'Anglais était parvenu à s'émanciper, à un très haut degré, des pires vices anglais : ses membres n'étaient ni insulaires, ni puritains, ni prudents : un scandale public élimina à jamais leur chef ; et, dissous, le groupe perdit toute influence sur la civilisation anglaise. Wilde et son cercle représentaient quelque chose de beaucoup plus important que chacun des membres du groupe pris isolément : ils représentaient un certain type de culture dont les traits essentiels étaient l'urbanité, l'éducation d'Oxford, la tradition du bien-écrire, le point de vue cosmopolite : ils étaient en contact avec le continent, et certains des membres les plus importants du groupe étaient des Irlandais. Bien entendu, en tant qu'écrivains, ils avaient des faiblesses qui ne sont que trop visibles aujourd'hui : je me trompe fort si *Dorian Gray* est autre chose que de la camelote et si le meilleur de Wilde ne se trouve pas dans *Intentions*. A mes yeux, le plus grand mérite de ces hommes ne réside pas dans leurs écrits, mais plutôt dans une

qualité morale qui leur était commune à tous : ils possédaient une curiosité, une audace, *une indifférence aux conséquences* qui s'opposent par un contraste violent à cette partie de la littérature actuelle que je qualifiais de déjà morte.

À la page 65 d'une anthologie récente qui, plus encore qu'elle n'est mauvaise, est dépourvue de toute signification (*An Anthology of Modern Verse* : Methuen & Co.), se trouve un poème d'Ernest Dowson, – un contemporain de Wilde qui a laissé quelques pièces d'une grande beauté. Ce poème n'est pas un de ses meilleurs : il est plein de clichés de l'époque qui ont leur origine dans Swinburne ; Dowson n'était pas d'ailleurs un poète très intellectuel ; cependant, lorsqu'on le compare aux vers contemporains qui l'entourent dans cette anthologie, c'est précisément par une dignité intellectuelle que le poète de Dowson se distingue. Il est immédiatement suivi par un poème de notre contemporain M. John Drinkwater dont le vide a pour couronnement les deux vers qui le terminent :

I turn to sleep, content that from my sires
I draw the blood of England's midmost shires[2]

S'endormir satisfait de la possession d'un mérite aussi simple, – voilà qui caractérise bien l'école de versificateurs que représente M. Drinkwater. Oscar Wilde et ses confrères ne se satisfaisaient pas à si bon compte. Malheureusement, plusieurs autres parmi les membres les plus brillants du groupe connurent des fins diversement désastreuses, et la petite société disparut.

Les quelques écrivains sérieux qui survécurent ou firent leur apparition dans la vacance des années qui suivirent, apparaissent soudain comme extrêmement isolés. Thomas Hardy était déjà un survivant d'une époque antérieure ; Henry James et Joseph Conrad sont des figures solitaires. Le caractère le plus notable de la période qui part de 1896 résida dans un *surjournalisme* actif, populaire, et assez vulgaire. Ce reproche toutefois ne saurait être appliqué à aucun des écrivains les plus en vue de cette époque sans qu'on le qualifiât. Wells et Bennett possèdent l'un et l'autre une sorte de génie qui leur a permis de produire quelques livres remarquables, et quelques passages remarquables dans des livres inférieurs. Shaw, qui est irlandais et qui de plus bénéficia de l'avantage d'avoir fréquenté le cercle de Wilde, n'est un journaliste que dans sa méthode : les mobiles de sa production sont au contraire d'un sérieux intense, – mais d'un sérieux qui n'est que rarement le sérieux propre à l'artiste littéraire. Parmi ces écrivains le plus douteux est

probablement Chesterton, et même Chesterton fait montre à l'occasion de pénétration. Cependant, en dépit du mérite individuel et de la très grande diversité qui existe entre leurs personnalités, l'influence exercée par tous ces hommes a tendu, à mon avis, dans une même direction ; la vulgarisation de la littérature. Chez des écrivains qui ne possèdent pas leurs mérites, l'absence de tout critérium élevé devient intolérable.

Une forme quelconque de dégénérescence déborde souvent jusque sur la période suivante, et il n'est même pas rare que ce soit alors qu'elle donne naissance à ses produits les plus excessifs, à ceux qui attirent le plus le regard. La vulgarisation commerciale dont je parle a progressé assidûment, et notre plus grand espoir réside dans la possibilité que le succès même qu'elle rencontre atteigne des proportions si manifestement absurdes qu'une réaction s'ensuive. De ce point de vue, l'accélération finale, la plus heureuse peut-être, est due à l'extrême popularité dont jouit la poésie pendant la guerre. Je ne fais pas seulement allusion à « la poésie de guerre » (bien que celle-ci ait connu une vogue particulière), mais à la poésie qui a trait aux sujets les plus innocents, à des sujets bucoliques. Je sais bien que les poètes que j'ai ici en vue objectent parfois à ce qu'on les classe dans un seul et même groupe. C'est un sujet pénible et sur lequel j'espère n'avoir pas à revenir. Mais des écrivains qui possèdent en commun des défauts flagrants, et qui ne se distinguent l'un de l'autre que par de légères nuances de sottise, doivent s'attendre à ce qu'on les critique en bloc. Le premier en date d'entre eux, et aussi le plus en vue, était Rupert Brooke : on trouve dans ses vers un certain goût d'amateur lequel joint à la beauté de l'homme faisaient de lui une figure attrayante. Il semble aussi que, différant en cela de beaucoup de ses admirateurs, Brooke n'ait pas pris son mérite trop au sérieux. M. Drinkwater, lui, est devenu presqu'un personnage trop officiel pour faire encore partie du groupe. (Il m'apparaît comme un candidat éventuel au poste de poète lauréat le jour où disparaîtrait Robert Bridges : ce dernier, d'une génération antérieure, d'un mérite très respectable, et d'une science exceptionnelle dans le domaine de la technique.) La majorité de ces poètes font montre d'intérêts locaux à l'excès et d'une culture toute provinciale. Comme chacun d'eux possède une très faible faculté de développement, il est naturel que les générations littéraires de ces poètes se succèdent avec une grande rapidité, et que les nouveaux venus se dévoilent encore plus inefficaces que leurs prédécesseurs. Signaler individuellement des écrivains dont j'estime qu'ils n'offrent pas le moindre intérêt pour un public étranger serait superflu ; je les mentionne en bloc parce qu'on les rencontre à chaque pas dans les revues anglaises, et aussi

parce que je désire rendre bien clair à quel point, du fait de leur existence, s'accuse le caractère de nouveauté de tout ce qui est authentiquement nouveau. À l'heure actuelle, les forces qui représentent le progrès ne sont pas en nombre suffisant pour influencer plus de quelques-uns parmi ces écrivains de second ordre qui imitent : seuls aujourd'hui les plus forts survivent.

Dans cette vue d'ensemble il est nécessaire de tenir compte également des changements qui se sont produits en Irlande et en Amérique. Il y a trente ou quarante ans, l'Irlande exerçait sur Londres une influence puissante et précieuse. Après la dissolution de la société dont Wilde était le membre le plus important, M. Yeats se trouva le principal survivant. Bien qu'il continuât à habiter Londres, M. Yeats s'en absentait souvent non seulement en esprit, mais aussi en fait, pour se consacrer à l'œuvre entreprise par le théâtre de l'Abbaye à Dublin. Londres n'offrait que peu de tentations pour induire les Irlandais à l'exil, et par suite les écrivains irlandais de second plan demeurèrent pour la plupart en Irlande ; l'on célébra en Synge un artiste irlandais traitant des sujets irlandais, et l'activité littéraire de ces années-là en Irlande doit être comptée au nombre des causes qui inspirèrent la révolution irlandaise en 1916. Cela semble fantastique à énoncer, mais cela souligne ce que je désire marquer ici : à mon avis le procès d'Oscar Wilde contribua à l'établissement du libre état d'Irlande.

À la même époque, ou plutôt à une époque postérieure – en fait dans ces dix dernières années – une autre action centrifuge avait eu pour résultat de séparer l'Amérique de l'Angleterre. Au cours du XIX^e^ siècle, l'ensemble de ce qui comptait dans la production littéraire américaine n'était guère qu'un dérivé local de la littérature anglaise ; avec une dignité étudiée, elle restait à sa remorque, et si j'excepte quelques hommes de grande importance – Poe, Whitman, Hawthorne – elle se bornait à la suivre sans apporter de contribution originale ou de départ nouveau. L'absence d'un nouvel effort créateur en Angleterre, le fait que le contrôle exclusif des lettres américaines cessa de se concentrer en un groupe de gentlemen de Boston qui avaient de proches attaches avec l'Université de Harvard, le déclin du prestige du professeur d'Université, l'accroissement dans la population des éléments non anglo-saxons – ces causes variées se sont combinées pour donner naissance à des styles qui ne se réfèrent plus en rien à des modèles anglais contemporains. Si l'on jauge leur importance artistique véritable, je ne suis pas enclin à accorder à nos contemporains en Amérique autant de valeur qu'ils s'en attribuent. Leurs œuvres sont intéressantes, – et l'on se rend bien compte pourquoi pour des Américains elles ont une importance souveraine – mais

elles sont intéressantes en tant que symptômes. On y sent une précipitation, une liberté, une espérance peut-être illusoire. Certains des poètes américains les plus en vue me paraissent, derrière une nouveauté et souvent une ingénuité de forme, donner expression à des pensées qui émanent d'esprits ordinaires et conventionnels : je citerai M. Masters, M. Sandburg, et M. Lindsay. Il y a en Amérique plusieurs romanciers de talent d'un intérêt local ; plusieurs critiques de grand talent, mais dont les forces s'emploient surtout à ramener à l'ordre les vices et la stupidité de leur propre nation. C'est là un travail fort utile à accomplir, auquel nous devrons peut-être un jour des fruits précieux, mais qui ne présente pas grand intérêt pour l'étranger.

Le lecteur se rendra compte par ce résumé que la littérature anglaise est dans un état de désintégration qui se résout pour le moins en trois variétés de provincialisme ; – et si l'on se reporte à l'histoire de l'empire romain, il semble que ce processus ait commencé très tôt. Il est certain que nous sommes dans une période instable, mais les faits sur lesquels j'ai appelé l'attention me paraissent correspondre à une aberration temporaire, et il suffirait de l'apparition d'un nouvel écrivain de premier rang pour arrêter cette désintégration. Je ne vois pas comment la littérature irlandaise pourra survivre à l'existence de l'*Ulysse* de M. James Joyce : un livre aussi irlandais qu'il se puisse quant aux matériaux, mais un livre d'une telle signification dans l'histoire de la langue anglaise qu'il ne peut pas ne pas prendre sa place comme partie intégrante de la tradition de cette langue. Un livre de cet ordre ne donne pas seulement forme à des possibilités incluses dans la langue et jamais encore essayées : il revivifie du même coup la totalité de son passé. « Tout écrivain qui trouve la langue anglaise inadéquate à ce qu'il veut exprimer », me disait un jour M. Joyce, « n'est qu'un cas du mauvais ouvrier qui ne trouvera jamais de bons outils. » Je reviendrai sur *Ulysse* ; comme article d'information et de pénétrante interprétation, je n'ai besoin que de renvoyer le lecteur à l'article de M. Larbaud qui a un goût et une connaissance de la littérature anglaise moderne que l'on ne rencontre que rarement même en Angleterre. Je me borne ici à signaler qu'une œuvre de l'importance d'*Ulysse* pose aux écrivains irlandais comme un critérium de style *anglais*. Il est évident qu'il ne saurait continuer à y avoir trois critériums pour trois nations qui parlent la même langue ; plus vaudront les écrivains dans les trois pays, et plus ils auront en commun.

À une époque comme la nôtre, l'écrivain de second ordre, – celui qui produit des œuvres charmantes, intelligentes et distinguées, – doit surtout

être pris en considération dans la mesure où ses œuvres se meuvent dans la même direction que celles des écrivains du premier rang et la flanquent. Cette période-ci n'est pas une période où nous puissions nous permettre de dire du bien de beaucoup d'ouvrages passables. Nous nous sentons aujourd'hui très abandonnés. Kipling (qui est devenu complètement l'équivalent anglais du *pompier*), Wells, Bennett, Chesterton, Shaw, sont séparés de nous par un gouffre ; dans leurs œuvres nous ne pouvons plus puiser de subsistance. En dépit de notre admiration, ni James, ni Conrad ne sont très proches de nous. Ce n'est pas, ainsi qu'on le dit souvent, que la littérature anglaise ait toujours été une simple collection d'hommes de génie isolés et capricieux ; il y a eu une longue tradition qui part de Ben Jonson et qui à travers Dryden, va jusqu'à Samuel Johnson et peut-être même un peu au-delà ; il y a eu une autre tradition qui part de Locke. La période actuelle est au contraire particulière par le fait de se rattacher si peu à la précédente : Walter Pater était un héritier d'Arnold et de Ruskin, et Wilde à son tour était un héritier de Pater. J'ai jugé que ces prolégomènes pourraient être utiles pour mieux saisir la signification des figures vraiment significatives de notre époque.

Pour terminer par quelques précisions, je citerai, comme exemple des vers américains contemporains les moins intéressants, la *Modern American Poetry* (Harcourt et Brace, New York). Je ne dois pas omettre de mentionner la publication de l'*Ulysse* de M. Joyce (Shakespeare & Co, Paris) ; celle de la revue de M. Wyndham Lewis, *The Tyro*, à Londres (The Egoist Ltd) et la publication récente par la même maison d'éditions des *Poèmes* de Miss Marianne Moore.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. This was the first of TSE's three contributions to the *NRF* under this title; for the English version, which he revised and published in *Vanity Fair* in Nov 1923, see "A Preface to Modern Literature" (482). Significant differences between the French and English versions are recorded in notes to the English text.

Though he had corresponded with editor Jacques Rivière about writing for the *NRF*, TSE did not arrange for regular contributions until co-founder André Gide wrote to him on 7 Dec 1921 to propose that he write "une chronique, qui renseignât les lecteurs français sur l'état de la littérature de votre pays" [a chronicle, informing the French reader about the state of literature in your country] (*L1* 610). On his way back to London from Lausanne in Jan 1922, TSE met with Rivière in Paris and agreed to send the first installment by the end of Feb. He finished the English manuscript circa 17 Feb 1922 (*L1* 636) and sent it to Rivière, who had it translated into

French by Charles du Bos before 4 Mar (*L1* 667-68). TSE evidently did not see proofs; he wrote to du Bos on 7 May, after the essay was published: "it is not simply that you have been faithful to the sense, but . . . the article is actually *better written* than it was in English" (*L1* 668).

2. Translator's note in *NRF*: "Je m'endors, satisfait de tenir de mes pères le sang des comtés qui sont au cœur de l'Angleterre."

London Letter: June, 1922[1]

The Dial, 73 (July 1922) 94-96

The death of Sir Walter Raleigh removes a figure of some dignity from a post of some importance. I use both phrases with responsibility. I have never seen and heard the late Professor of Poetry at Oxford, and have never read a line of his writings.[2] But he occupied the post of some importance, and though he may have left it no more important than he found it, he never, so far as I know, made it ridiculous. As for the post, I know well enough that such positions are not for the absolutely first-rate men, but their importance does not depend upon being held by the absolutely first-rate men; it is perhaps not even desirable that they should be held by the first-rate men. It is only a limited range of originality, like that of Anatole France, that is appropriate to be rewarded by the *Académie Française*.[3] But the *Académie* stands for something valuable; and so should the Professorship of Poetry at Oxford. It is not to the interest of English literature that the Professorship of Poetry at Oxford should pass to the servile, the indefinite, or the sluggish. And we may as easily get a less worthy Professor of Poetry than Sir Walter Raleigh, as a less worthy Laureate than Robert Bridges.[4]

Dr. Bridges is a much more valuable personage, it must be said, than was Raleigh. He is the best living specimen in England of the good academic poet; and the word "academic" is not to be read in a pejorative sense. His *Milton's Prosody* is a piece of work well done.[5] If I were to nominate his successor, the choice would be, I think, Mr. Sturge Moore; also a conscientious, sensitive, and scholarly poet with a respect for the English language.[6] But to find a successor for Sir Walter Raleigh I should be at a loss.

The requirements are difficult: the good academic mind is as rare in England as the good revolutionary mind; there is an originality about the good academic mind, as essential to it as another originality is to the creative mind. The good critic of poetry cannot be merely an astute specialist, like Sir Sidney Lee, or an able biographer, like Sir Sidney Colvin, or a polite essayist, like Mr. Edmund Gosse, or a polite moralist, like Mr. Clutton-Brock.[7] All of these gentlemen may be accused of seriousness if one is seeking mirth: but for a Professor of Poetry the choice of any one of

them would be simply frivolous. The simplest way of dealing with the contemporary writers of *belles-lettres* is to divide them into two classes: the Gentleman in a Library, and the earnest Liberal. Neither is quite what we want.

The Gentleman in a Library is well read, and has a taste for books. In his highest form of development he is a genuine scholar, with considerable acuteness, and a vigorous gusto for literature. His highest manifestation in England is Professor Saintsbury. Mr. Saintsbury is a scholar: and he knows a great deal about Port (his *Notes for a Cellarbook* are inadequate on the side of German wines).[8] His services to literature have been great: had he done nothing but his edition of Caroline Poets in three volumes he would still have earned our perpetual gratitude. What is singular about his criticism is the range of his enjoyment: he enjoys not only the first, but the second, third, and tenth-rate, without confusion or illusions. If there is the smallest mustard seed of pleasure to be found in some forgotten poet or novelist, Mr. Saintsbury will extract it. Consequently, Mr. Saintsbury is often more entertaining when he writes about authors whom we do not want to read, than when he writes about authors whom we know. Things which we are incapable of enjoying for ourselves we enjoy through Mr. Saintsbury.

The second Gentleman in a Library is Mr. Charles Whibley. I also prize Mr. Whibley because he has read so many things that I have not read, and because he is not a Whig. His great limitation, in contrast to Mr. Saintsbury, is his affection for quaintness; he is a disciple of Henley and was a friend of George Wyndham. On the other hand, I do not know who else could write about Bolingbroke.[9]

I think that these are the two best specimens: there are many varieties. As the gentleman becomes the journalist, we get essays in the C. Lamb tradition; as he becomes the theologian, we get, with pomposity and pretence, Mr., or rather the late Mr. A. J. and now Earl Balfour.[10] Social ambitions, again, produce the literary chatterbox. The gentleman turned professor produces works of sometimes useful and sometimes useless scholarship. I recognize in Mr. A. C. Bradley some of the acuteness of his greater brother, but whereas *Appearance and Reality* is a fine work of art, Four Plays of Shakespeare strikes me as a needless luxury.[11] Professor Mackail wrote a History of Latin Literature which was the first incentive to at least one boy to read Latin poetry; but Mr. Mackail, a belated pre-Raphaelite, shows a

tendency towards Liberalism. (Nevertheless, his lecture on Pope is worth reading.)[12]

The Gentleman in a Library has dignity; he lacks, to put it in the crudest way, "punch." This the Liberal endeavours to provide. For the former, Literature is a pleasure for the more cultivated upper classes; for the latter, it is Education for the Million. Mr. Clutton-Brock really does, I think, try to improve the Million up to the pleasantness and peace of the William Morris way of life; I believe he is a Christian Socialist.[13] The great weakness of our Liberal Practitioners is that they have abandoned a safe position without having the skill to prepare another. The Liberal is merely a drifting Conservative, and much more obstructive to genuine innovation in the Arts than the firm Conservative, because he persuades the public that he is himself modern, and that anything more original than himself is not modernity but madness.

No. For a Professor of Poetry I believe that I should choose an American, Professor Irving Babbitt. Not that I agree with all of Mr. Babbitt's opinions: but partly that there are few writers so well worth disagreeing with. There is no doubt that Mr. Babbitt is a far more serious writer than any of the Englishmen I have mentioned. He is more learned – or, to be more precise, better equipped; he has strong convictions; and he has just that valuable and rare academic originality which we seek. In Mr. Babbitt's mind the classical culture is *active*; he is perfectly honest; and he does not forget that Homer, Virgil, and Dante have each certain qualities not so well represented in Shakespeare.[14]

Shakespeare has been a subject of attention lately, owing to two books, Mr. Robertson's *Shakespeare Canon*, and Mr. Clutton-Brock's *Shakespeare's Hamlet*. Both discussions are really due to Mr. Robertson; he wrote an essay on *Hamlet* several years ago which I reviewed, and his essay and my review appear to have provided the impulse to Mr. Brock.[15] Mr. Brock's argument I have not read; it may be a very good one. It is difficult to tell, from the reviews, what Mr. Brock's argument is; for they have seized merely on one or two sentences, of my own or of Mr. Robertson's, and neglected discussion of the issue: which is *not* whether other plays of Shakespeare are "greater" or "better" than *Hamlet*, but whether that play is a perfect artistic whole, and whether Shakespeare succeeded completely in expressing the content of emotion.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Composed between 13 May (Raleigh's death) and 20 May, when TSE left for Lugano, Switzerland, for two weeks. After it was published, Vivien Eliot told Richard Aldington, who had criticized the tone of this "Letter," that it was written while TSE was very ill: "*he asked me what he should say*. And I told him what to say, and he just wrote it down . . . So the article is more mine than his" (*L1* 701). This was the sixth of TSE's eight regular "London Letters" for the *Dial*, each bearing the date below the title.

2. Scottish poet Sir Walter Alexander Raleigh (1861-1922) died of typhoid fever on 13 May; TSE mistakes the first Chair of English Literature at Oxford, to which Raleigh was appointed in June 1904, for the Oxford Professorship of Poetry, a prestigious position endowed in the eighteenth century and held by W. P. Ker from 1920 until his death in July 1923. For TSE's remarks on Ker's successor, H. W. Garrod, see "A Commentary" (July 1924) (529).

3. Anatole France was elected in 1896 to the Académie française, France's official authority on language, founded in the seventeenth century.

4. Robert Bridges was the British Poet Laureate from 1913 to 1930.

5. *Milton's Prosody: An Examination of the Rules of the Blank Verse in Milton's Later Poems, with an Account of the Versification of Samson Agonistes* (1893).

6. TSE had spoken alongside Thomas Sturge Moore (1870-1944) and others at the Lyceum Club in 1920 and had written to him on 3 Apr 1922 to request a contribution for the upcoming *Criterion* (*L1* 655); Moore's essay "The Story of Tristram and Isolt in Modern Poetry" was printed in two parts in the first two issues.

7. Sir Sidney Lee (1859-1926), second editor of the *Dictionary of National Biography*, edited the 1902 Oxford facsimile edition of Shakespeare's plays; Sidney Colvin was known for his biographies of Dürer (1877), Landor (1881), and, most recently, John Keats (1917).

8. Saintsbury, *Notes on a Cellar-Book* (1920). TSE had expressed admiration for the catholicity of Saintsbury's taste in a review in 1919 of his *History of the French Novel* (48). In a *Criterion* publicity pamphlet printed in 1966, he recalled: "when starting *The Criterion*, I wished to include representatives of both older and younger generations, and opened with a contribution from that genial *doyen* of English letters, George Saintsbury." *A Note on The Criterion* (London: Faber, 1966), 1. By the time the present "London Letter" was published, TSE had already secured from Saintsbury the essay that would appear in the inaugural issue of the *Criterion*.

9. Whibley was a prominent conservative journalist whose columns in *Blackwood's Magazine* TSE admired greatly. He contributed an introduction to George Wyndham's *Essays in Romantic Literature*, which TSE reviewed in 1919 (26). And he worked with editor W. E. Henley (1849-1903) at the *Scots Observer* and wrote introductions to several volumes in Henley's *Tudor Translations* series. TSE had evidently been in touch with Whibley about his forthcoming essay on English politician Henry St. John, first Viscount Bolingbroke (1678-1751), which would appear in two parts in the *Criterion* in Apr-July 1923.

10. Former Prime Minister Arthur James Balfour, who accepted the first earldom of Balfour on 5 May 1922, was the author of *A Defence of Philosophic Doubt: Being an Essay on the Foundations of Belief* (1879), which TSE read as a graduate student at Harvard, and of *Theism and Humanism* (1914), which was the subject of TSE's first review for the *International Journal of Ethics* in 1916 (1.394).

11. TSE likely refers to *Shakespearean Tragedy: Lectures on Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth* (London: Macmillan, 1904) by A. C. Bradley, the youngest brother of F. H. Bradley, whose *Appearance and Reality* was the subject of TSE's dissertation. A. C. Bradley, who held the Oxford Professorship of Poetry from 1901 to 1906, had preceded Raleigh in his two appointments previous to Oxford, as professor of Modern Literature at University College, Liverpool, and as chair of English at Glasgow University.

12. Scottish writer J. W. Mackail, friend and biographer of William Morris, published *Latin Literature* (London: J. Murray) in 1895; TSE owned and made notes in the first American edition (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1895) (Houghton). Mackail's lecture was published as *Pope: The Leslie Stephen Lecture Delivered before the University of Cambridge, 10 May 1919* (1919). Mackail held the Oxford Professorship of Poetry from 1906 to 1911.

13. Clutton-Brock's admiration for the socialist thinking of William Morris led him to join the British socialist Fabian Society in 1909 and to publish *William Morris: His Work and Influence* in 1914. During the war and after, he became better known for his articles and tracts on Christianity, including *The Ultimate Belief* (1916), which TSE reviewed in 1916 (1.436).

14. A professor of French at Harvard since 1894, Babbitt writes in *Literature and the American College: Essays in Defense of the Humanities* (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1908) about the lack of a transcendent order in Shakespeare: "Shakespeare's world compared with that of other great poets, Homer or Sophocles or Dante, impresses one less as a cosmos and more as a romantic chaos" (59).

15. J. M. Robertson's *The Shakespeare Canon* appeared in Feb 1922; Arthur Clutton-Brock explains in the preface to *Shakespeare's Hamlet* (London: Methuen, 1922) that he published the book in opposition to "the theories of Mr. J. M. Robertson and Mr. T. S. Eliot . . . which imply, or assert, that Hamlet is not a masterpiece at all, but an accident or failure. Mr. Eliot's criticism, in particular, seems to me to be based on a misunderstanding, not only of this play but of the whole nature of art" (v-vi). For TSE's review of Robertson's *The Problem of Hamlet* (1919), see "Hamlet" (122).

London Letter: August, 1922[1]

The Dial, 73 (Sept 1922) 329-31

THE NOVEL

It is sometimes supposed, when any new and excellent work of art appears, that a new era of creative work will be directly propagated. Certainly, great works of art do in some way mark or modify an epoch, but less often by the new things which they make possible, than by the old things to which they put an end. After Shakespeare, very little; after Dante, nothing; after Henry James, nothing in that kind. So the intelligent literary aspirant, studying *Ulysses*, will find it more an encyclopaedia of what he is to avoid attempting, than of the things he may try for himself.[2] It is at once the exposure and the burlesque of that of which it is the perfection. And *Ulysses* is not a work which can be compared with any "novel."

And it is almost as difficult to compare what are called "novels" with each other. When a novelist is worth the pains, the only task is to find his particular topography, the characteristics of his universe, and judge their consistency; he can only be compared with others for the purpose of illustrating the general differences. Only in detail is comparison possible. There are at present, so far as my knowledge extends, three main types of English novel. Whether any one type has a future is doubtful, but a future novelist may still learn something from each. And so I do not know how to compare them with each other. I must mention them separately, without the shadow of a comparison between any representatives of each.

There is first the old narrative method, the tale, traditional in English fiction. The novelist has depended for his success upon a gift of invention, in plot, and an accurate knowledge of a social *milieu*. As Wells knows the Cockney (whom he has lately abandoned) as Bennett knows his Midlander (whom he has abandoned) so Mr. Compton Mackenzie knows a certain theatrical world of London.[3] Mr. Mackenzie lays on, not so much sentiment, as coloured detail; and the reader has to accustom himself to the calcium light by which the actor is made visible. But a clever writer of this type, like Mr. Mackenzie, simply because he is satisfied to write about what he knows, not complicating it with any striving to attain a point of view

not his own, may produce an interesting or even valuable document. Mr. Mackenzie is better worth reading than many more pretentious and sophisticated writers. He is not admired by the intellectuals, but on the other hand there is a popularity which he will never attain. No book of his will ever have the success of *If Winter Comes*.[4]

I should be sorry to see this type of novel disappear, unless it is to be replaced by something better. Another interesting type, but of a very short ancestry, is the *psychoanalytic* type, notably illustrated by Miss Sinclair's *Harriett Frean* and by a less finished, but commendable book, Miss G. B. Stern's *The Room*.[5] In Miss Sinclair's book a method seems to have been carried about as far as it will go; and because it is a scientific method, and rests upon a dubious and contentious branch of science, I doubt whether even Miss Sinclair can carry it much further. Miss Stern does not reduce us to quite the state of lucid despair of Miss Sinclair, but that is because she does not carry the method so far. The conclusion of Miss Sinclair's book (it has already been reviewed in *The Dial* – I only refer to it in describing a type)[6] extracts as much pity and terror as can be extracted from the materials: but because the material is so clearly defined (the soul of man under psychoanalysis)[7] there is no possibility of tapping the atmosphere of unknown terror and mystery in which our life is passed and which psychoanalysis has not yet analysed. So that if I may predict, it is that Miss Sinclair will find herself forced to proceed from psychotherapy even to the supernatural, or at least to that transfinite world with which Henry James was in such close intercourse.

Both Miss Sinclair and Miss Stern – this type of fiction would appear to be practised rather by women, and rather by extremely intelligent women – are too shrewd, I imagine, to pass on to the third or Dostoevsky type of novel. I recall one very interesting essay in this kind, Mr. Murry's *Still Life*, an excellent study of a peculiarly revolting form of spiritual corruption: but the method has produced more failures than successes.[8] All novelists are dangerous models for other novelists, but Dostoevsky – a Russian, known only through one translation – is especially dangerous.[9] For the method is only permissible if you see things the way Dostoevsky saw them. I would not disparage a great writer by pointing to the fortunes of his offspring. One reason of Dostoevsky's appeal to the British mind is that he appears to satisfy the usual definition of genius; that is, an infinite capacity for taking no pains. On the other hand it is no good making a gospel of taking pains, either; if a writer has not the standard of perfection in himself, he will not acquire it from public agitation in favour of "technique." (I have even read

in a newspaper article in this country, that the highest form of literary genius is indifferent to very careful execution.[10] It is truer to say that every good writer will be careful about what is important for his purpose – but purposes vary indefinitely.) My own view is that Dostoevsky had the gift, a sign of genius in itself, for utilizing his weaknesses; so that epilepsy and hysteria cease to be the defects of an individual and become – as a fundamental weakness can, given the ability to face it and study it – the entrance to a genuine and personal universe.[11] I do not suppose that Dostoevsky's struggles were fundamentally alien to Flaubert's. I cannot believe, at all events, that Dostoevsky was a muddle-headed soul-struggler any more than I can believe that Plato was an Oxford don. Of course, he sometimes parodies himself (his parodies are instructive); but anything, unless it is as well done as it can be done, may be ridiculous.

One writer, and indeed, in my opinion, the most interesting novelist in England – who has apparently been somewhat affected by Dostoevsky, is Mr. D. H. Lawrence. Mr. Lawrence has progressed – by fits and starts, it is true; for he has perhaps done nothing as good as a whole as *Sons and Lovers*. He has never yet, I think, quite surrendered himself to his work. He still theorizes at times when he should merely see. His theory has not yet reached the point at which it is no longer a theory, he still requires (at the end of *Aaron's Rod*) the mouthpiece for an harangue.[12] But there is one scene in this book – a dialogue between an Italian and several Englishmen, in which one feels that the whole is governed by a creator who is purely creator, with the terrifying disinterestedness of the true creator.[13] And for that we can forgive Mr. Lawrence his subsequent lapse into a theory of human relationships.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. TSE sent the typescript to the *Dial* on 24 July (*L1* 710). This was the seventh of his eight regular "London Letters" for the *Dial*, each bearing the date below the title.

2. TSE had read parts of *Ulysses* in manuscript and in installments in the *Little Review* and the *Egoist* before the novel was published in Paris on Joyce's fortieth birthday, 2 Feb 1922. At the end of March, Joyce reported that all but about 130 of the first edition of one thousand copies had been sold. Preparations were currently under way for the first English edition, which was published by John Rodker for the Egoist Press on 12 Oct 1922. Virginia Woolf records a conversation in Sept 1922 in which TSE remarked similarly that *Ulysses* was "a landmark, because it destroyed the whole of the 19th Century. . . . It showed up the futility of all English styles" (*Diary* 2.203).

3. H. G. Wells was born into a working-class family in Bromley, Kent. While his earlier novels, such as *Kipps: The Story of a Simple Soul* (1905) and *The History of Mr. Polly* (1910), frequently featured Cockney protagonists struggling with desperate economic circumstances, his recent projects included *The Outline of History* (1919-20) and *The New Teaching of History* (1921). Arnold Bennett was born in Staffordshire in the English Midlands, the thinly veiled setting of his novels, such as *Anna of the Five Towns* (1902) and the autobiographical *Clayhanger* (1910); his later books *The Roll Call* and *The Pretty Lady* (both 1918) are set in London. Compton Mackenzie was the son of two popular Victorian actors; his novel about the descent of a young ballerina into London's theatrical underworld, *Carnival* (1912), was reprinted in 1922 in Nash's Famous Fiction series; his latest novel, *The Altar Steps*, had appeared in June.

4. A. S. M. Hutchinson's *If Winter Comes* was published in Aug 1921 and went through twenty-three printings before the end of its first year alone; it was ranked the best-selling book in the United States for 1922 by *Publishers Weekly*.

5. May Sinclair was the author of *Life and Death of Harriett Frean* (Jan 1922) and a founding member of the first London clinic to offer psychoanalytic therapy. TSE reviewed her *A Defence of Idealism* for the *New Statesman* in 1917 (1.585). When he contacted her about contributing to the first *Criterion*, Sinclair wrote on 17 Mar 1922 that she had nothing "good enough" at hand but offered him "one of my best ghost stories," adding: "It is time a really good quarterly was started, and I can't think of anyone better fitted to edit it than you. At last there'll be a chance for the people who matter most to get a hearing; and for the London Mercury not to have it all its own way" (Houghton). In an ad in the *TLS* (17 Aug 1922), TSE included Sinclair's name on a select list of contributors to the first issue of the *Criterion*, in which her story "The Victim" appeared. And on 19 June 1924, he told her that an excerpt from her new verse novel was "an important step in the transition of the novel into some other form, which I feel is an inevitable development already foreshadowed in some of your work as well as in that of Joyce" (*L2* 446). *The Room* by G. B. Stern (1890-1973), also an avid follower of Freudian analysis, appeared in Apr 1922. Printer's error in *Dial*: "E. G. Stern."

6. Raymond Mortimer, "Miss Sinclair Again," *The Dial*, 72 (May 1922), 531-34. TSE told St. John Hutchinson on 13 Oct 1921 that the editors of the *Dial* had reproached him once before for discussing a book that had already been reviewed there (*L1* 591); see "London Letter: September, 1921" (369).

7. An echo of the title of Oscar Wilde's essay "The Soul of Man under Socialism" (1891).

8. Murry's first novel, *Still Life*, appeared in 1916, the same year in which he wrote *Fyodor Dostoevsky: A Critical Study* and translated Dostoevsky's *Pages from the Journal of an Author*. The novel's protagonists are obsessively introspective and act on unpredictable whims of passion; as a *TLS* reviewer (21 Dec 1916) described it, "All is uncertainty, turmoil, apprehension, and disgust" (623).

9. TSE first read Dostoevsky's work in the French translations of Victor Derély; many of the earliest English translations were authored by Frederick James Whishaw in the late nineteenth century, though those by TSE's contemporary, Constance Garnett, were the most readily available by 1922. On 25 May, the Woolfs sent TSE a translation of Dostoevsky's notes titled "Plan of the Novel, 'The Life of a Great Sinner,'" which soon appeared in the first issue of the *Criterion*. Virginia Woolf recalls discussing the Russian novelist with him on 23 Sept: "Dostoevsky – the ruin of English literature, we agreed" (*Diary* 2.203).

10. untraced.

11. Dostoevsky began to experience severe attacks of epilepsy in the late 1840s. Epileptic seizures had been increasingly associated with hysteria since the late nineteenth century, when the neurological study of hystero-epilepsy gained currency.

12. TSE told Virginia Woolf on 23 Sept 1922 that Lawrence (whose *Sons and Lovers* was published in 1913) "came off occasionally, especially in Aaron's Rod," published in June, and that he could "cling tight to his conviction" (*Diary* 2.203). In the novel's final pages, the charismatic writer Rawdon Lilly delivers a lengthy speech (in terms similar to those that Lawrence had used in his 1921 treatise, *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*) on the two motives of human activity and relationships, the love-urge and the power-urge.

13. Composed almost entirely of dialogue, chapter 27 features Aaron Sisson, Rawdon Lilly, and others sitting on the terrace of a Florentine hotel and talking with Manfredi, the husband of Aaron's lover.

To the Editor of *The Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury*[1]

The Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury (30 Nov 1922) 9

Sir, – My attention has been called to two paragraphs about myself in the issue of the *Liverpool Post* of the 16th of this month.[2] The two paragraphs contain a number of statements which are quite untrue.

No such collection or presentation as that mentioned ever took place, and I never made the statement attributed to me. I have not received £800 or any part of such sum, nor have I received any sum from "Bel Esprit," nor have I left the bank.[3] The "Bel Esprit" scheme in the manifesto referred to by your correspondent is not in existence with my consent or approval. Finally the appearance of my poem in the *Criterion* is not the result of any "scheme" whatever.

The circulation of untrue stories of this kind causes me profound astonishment and annoyance, and may also do me considerable harm. They are a reflection on me and on my dealings with my friends. I trust that you will take immediate steps to put this matter right.[4]

Yours etc.,

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Titled by the *Liverpool Daily Post* "Mr. T. S. Eliot's Contradiction" under the heading "Books and Bookmen." TSE learned about the original column on 18 Nov and composed his response shortly thereafter; for his account of the delay in publication, see *L1* 798.

2. In the "Books and Bookmen" column on 16 Nov 1922, Brother Savage had reported that TSE was "the first beneficiary under a unique scheme through which a co-operation of English, French, and American enthusiasts, known as 'Bel Esprit,' pledged themselves to give $50 per year for life or as long as the author needs it." After paraphrasing a circular for "Bel Esprit" (the idea and the term were both Pound's, who had the circular printed for immediate distribution among friends in Mar 1922; see illustration 24), Savage alleged that a similar attempt to free TSE from Lloyds Bank had occurred two years earlier, after which, despite £800 raised on his behalf, he declined to abandon his position. After suggesting that TSE had suffered "a severe nervous breakdown," the article concluded: "The poem in *The Criterion* is the initial result of what must be regarded as a considerate and generous scheme, with excellent possibilities." The complete text of the article is reprinted in *L1* 789-90.

3. TSE did not prohibit the early efforts of "Bel Esprit" on his behalf, but he had been reluctant about the plan since Pound told him about it in June 1922. He wrote shortly thereafter to Aldington, "The situation is embarrassing and fatiguing to me in spite of the motives, which I appreciate," adding that he feared it would amount to a "precarious and slightly undignified charity" (*L1* 688). On 2 Aug, he told Sydney Schiff, a promised subscriber: "if the affair becomes public in such a way as to jeopardise my present position or make me ridiculous, I shall be forced publicly to discountenance it. As it is, no one could find it agreeable to have his private needs and way of life a subject of public scrutiny and criticism, however devoted it shows his friends to be" (*L1* 716). Though a total of £300 was pledged by more than twenty subscribers, the "Bel Esprit" plan did not continue after this public disclosure.

4. Directly beneath TSE's letter, the editors responded that they were "extremely sorry": "We are quite sure that nothing except a tribute to Mr. Eliot's high position as a critic and poet was intended"; for their full response, see *L1* 795. When TSE sent clippings of the original column along with his response and the editors' apology to Virginia Woolf, he told her, "I do not consider that the reparation offered by the *Liverpool Post* is at all adequate considering the grossness of the accusation" (*L1* 798).

Marie Lloyd[1]

It requires some effort to understand why one person, among many who do a thing with accomplished skill, should be greater than the others; and it is not always easy to distinguish superiority from great popularity, when the two go together. Although I have always admired the genius of Marie Lloyd[2†] I do not think that I always appreciated its uniqueness; I certainly did not realize that her death would strike me as the important event that it was.[3†] Marie Lloyd was the greatest music-hall artist of her time in England:[4†] she was also the most popular. And popularity in her case was not merely evidence of her accomplishment; it was something more than success. It is evidence of the extent to which she represented and expressed that part of the English nation which has perhaps the greatest vitality and interest.[5†]

Among all of that small number of music-hall performers, whose names are familiar to what is called the lower class, Marie Lloyd had far the strongest hold on popular affection. The attitude of audiences toward Marie Lloyd was different from their attitude toward any other of their favourites of that day, and this difference represents the difference in her art.[6†] Marie Lloyd's audiences were invariably sympathetic, and it was through this sympathy that she controlled them. Among living music-hall artists none can better control an audience than[7†] Nellie Wallace. I have seen Nellie Wallace interrupted by jeering or hostile comment from a boxful of Eastenders; I have seen her, hardly pausing in her act, make some quick retort that silenced her tormenters for the rest of the evening. But I have never known Marie Lloyd to be confronted by this kind of hostility; in any case, the feeling of the vast majority of the audience was so manifestly on her side, that no objector would have dared to lift his voice. And the difference is this: that whereas other comedians amuse their audiences as much and sometimes more than Marie Lloyd, no other comedian succeeded so well in giving expression to the life of that audience, in raising it to a kind of art. It was, I think, this capacity for expressing the soul of the people that made Marie Lloyd unique, and that made her audiences, even when they joined in the chorus, not so much hilarious as happy.

In the details of acting Marie Lloyd was perhaps the most perfect, in her own style, of British actresses.[8†] There are no cinema records of her;[9†] she

never descended to this form of money-making; it is to be regretted, however, that there is no film of her to preserve for the recollection of her admirers the perfect expressiveness of her smallest gestures. But it is less in the accomplishment of her act than in what she made it, that she differed from other comedians.[10†] There was nothing about her of the grotesque; none of her comic appeal was due to exaggeration; it was all a matter of selection and concentration. The most remarkable of the survivors of the music-hall stage, to my mind, are Nellie Wallace and Little Tich;[11*] but each of these is a kind of grotesque; their acts are an orgy of parody of the human race.[12†] For this reason, the appreciation of these artists requires less knowledge of the environment. To appreciate, for instance, the last turn in which Marie Lloyd appeared, one ought to know what objects[13†] a middle-aged woman of the charwoman class would carry in her bag; exactly how she would go through her bag in search of something; and exactly the tone of voice in which she would enumerate the objects she found in it. This was only part of the acting in Marie Lloyd's last song, "One of the Ruins that Cromwell Knocked Abaht a Bit."[14†]

Marie Lloyd's art will, I hope, be discussed by more competent critics of the theatre than I. My own chief point is that I consider her superiority over other performers to be in a way a moral superiority: it was her understanding of the people and sympathy with them, and the people's recognition of the fact that she embodied the virtues which they genuinely most respected in private life, that raised her to the position she occupied at her death. And her death is itself a significant moment in English history. I have called her the expressive figure of the lower classes. There is no such expressive figure[15†] for any other class. The middle classes have no such idol: the middle classes are morally corrupt. That is to say, their own life fails to find a Marie Lloyd to express it; nor have they any independent virtues which might give them as a conscious class any dignity.[16†] The middle classes, in England as elsewhere, under democracy, are morally dependent upon the aristocracy, and the aristocracy are subordinate to the middle class,[17†] which is gradually absorbing and destroying them. The lower class still exists; but perhaps it will not exist for long.[18†] In the music-hall comedians they find the expression and dignity of their own lives; and this is not found in the most elaborate and expensive revue.[19†] In England, at any rate, the revue expresses almost nothing. With the decay of the music-hall, with the encroachment of the cheap and rapid-breeding cinema, the lower classes will tend to drop into the same state of protoplasm as the

bourgeoisie.[20†] The working man who went to the music-hall and saw Marie Lloyd and joined in the chorus was himself performing part of the act;[21†] he was engaged in that collaboration of the audience with the artist which is necessary in all art and most obviously in dramatic art. He will now go to the cinema, where his mind is lulled by continuous senseless music and continuous action too rapid for the brain to act upon, and will receive, without giving, in that same listless apathy with which the middle and upper classes regard any entertainment of the nature of art. He will also have lost some of his interest in life. Perhaps this will be the only solution. In an interesting essay in the volume of *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia*, the psychologist W. H. R. Rivers[22†] adduced evidence which has led him to believe that the natives of that unfortunate archipelago are dying out principally for reason that the "Civilization" forced upon them has deprived them of all interest in life.[23] They are dying from pure boredom. When every theatre has been replaced by 100 cinemas, when every musical instrument has been replaced by 100 gramophones, when every horse has been replaced by 100 cheap motor-cars, when electrical ingenuity has made it possible for every child to hear its bedtime stories from a loud-speaker,[24†] when applied science has done everything possible with the materials on this earth to make life as interesting as possible, it will not be surprising if the population of the entire civilized world rapidly follows the fate of the Melanesians.[25*†]

NOTES

1. As printed in *SE*; originally published as TSE's final "London Letter" (dated Nov 1922) for the *Dial*, 73 (Dec 1922), 659-63; revised and rpt. as "In Memoriam: Marie Lloyd" in the second issue of the *Criterion* (Jan 1923), 192-95. Composed after 12 Oct, the date of the *Star* article from which TSE quoted in the *Dial* version (see note 5).

2†. In *Dial:* "It requires some effort of analysis to understand why one person, among many who do a thing with accomplished skill, should be greater than the others; nor is it always easy to distinguish superiority from great popularity, when the two go together. I am thinking of Marie Lloyd, who has died only a short time before the writing of this letter. Although I have always admired her genius"

3†. In *Dial*: "the most important event which I have had to chronicle in these pages."

Accounts of her final days differ, but the *Times* obituary (9 Oct) reported that Lloyd collapsed on stage at the Edmonton Empire on 3 Oct after performing one of her trademark songs, "It's a Bit of a Ruin that Cromwell Knocked about a Bit," during which the audience mistook her unsteady gait and fall for part of the act and shrieked with laughter (14). Lloyd died from heart and kidney failure on 7 Oct at her home in Golders Green. Thousands attended her funeral procession on 12 Oct to Hampstead cemetery, where the crowds stood twelve deep.

4†. In *Dial* and *Criterion*: "greatest music-hall artist in England:"

5†. In *Dial*, the following paragraph appeared after the first paragraph break ("greatest vitality and interest.") and before the beginning of the second paragraph as it currently reads ("Among all of that small number"): "Marie Lloyd's funeral became a ceremony which surprised even her warmest admirers: 'The scenes from an early hour yesterday, had been eloquent of the supreme place which Marie Lloyd held in the affection of the people. Wreaths had poured into the house in Woodstock Road from all parts of the country. There were hundreds of them from people whose names are almost household words on the variety stage, and from such people as 'a flower boy' in Piccadilly Circus: the taxi-drivers of Punter's Garage: and the Costermongers' Union of Farringdon Road . . . . Bombardier Wells sent a wreath. It was a white cushion, and across it in violets were the words 'At Rest: With deepest sympathy from Mrs. and Billie Wells.' . . .Tributes were also sent by Hetty King, Clarice Mayne, Clara Mayne, Little Tich, Arthur Prince, George Mozart, Harry Weldon, Charles Austin, Gertie Gitana, the Brothers Egbert, Zetta Mare, Julia Neilson, and Fred Terry, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Curzon, Marie Loftus, many of the provincial music-halls, the Gulliver halls, and dressers from most of the theatres, and many of Miss Lloyd's old school chums. . . . A favourite song of Miss Lloyd's was recalled by a wreath fashioned like a bird's cage. The cage was open, but the old cock linnet had flown . . . . A large floral horseshoe, with whip, cap, and stirrups, was from 'Her Jockey Pals' – Donoghue, Archibald, and other men famous in the racing world. . . . There were other wreaths from the National Sporting Club, the Eccentric Club, the Ladies' Theatrical Guild, the Variety Artists' Federation, Albert and Mrs. Whelan, Lorna and Toots Pound, Kate Carney, Nellie Wallace, the Ring at Blackfriars, Connie Ediss (who sent red roses) the Camberwell Palace (a white arch with two golden gates), Lew Lake, Major J. Arnold Wilson, and innumerable other people.'" TSE quotes at length from *The Star* (12 Oct 1922), 1, 8.

6†. In *Dial*: "hold on popular affection. She is known to many audiences in America. I have never seen her perform in America, but I cannot imagine that she would be seen there at her best; she was only seen at her best under the stimulus of those audiences in England, and especially in Cockney London, who had crowded to hear her for thirty years. The attitude of these audiences was different, toward Marie Lloyd, from what it was toward any other of their favourites, and this difference represents the difference in her art."

7†. In *Dial* and *Criterion*: "none can so well control an audience as"

8†. In *Dial*: "It is true that in the details of acting Marie Lloyd was perhaps the most perfect, in her own line, of British actresses." In *Criterion*: "It is true that in the details of acting Marie Lloyd was perhaps the most perfect, in her own style, of British actresses."

9†. In *Dial* and *Criterion*: "There are – thank God – no cinema records of her"

Lloyd never appeared in early demonstration films performing her trademark acts, but she was featured in three silent films: *Marie Lloyd's Little Joke* (June 1909), *Marie Lloyd at Home, and Bunkered* (Nov 1913), and *The Man Who Made Good* (Apr 1917).

10†. In *Dial*: "But it is more in the thing that she made it, than in the accomplishment of her act, that she differed"

11*. TSE's note, added in *SE* (1932): "Without prejudice to the younger generation."

12†. In *Dial* and *Criterion*: "an inconceivable orgy of parody of the human race."

The four-foot-tall character comedian "Little Tich" (Harry Relph) was famous for his "Big Boots" dance, performed in a pair of twenty-eight-inch boots, and for his stumbling parody of

Loie Fuller's elegant "Serpentine dance." Nellie Wallace, one of the few successful female pantomimes, was known for her parodies of the Old Maid and had been praised for her recent role as Dame Trot in *Jack and the Beanstalk* at the Hippodrome.

13†. In *Dial* and *Criterion*: "already exactly what objects"

14†. In *Dial*, TSE gave the title, "I'm One of the Ruins That Cromwell Knocked Abaht a Bit," and the following paragraph ensued: "Marie Lloyd was of London – in fact of Hoxton – and on the stage from her earliest years. It is pleasing to know that her first act was for a Hoxton audience, when at the age of ten she organized the Fairy Bell Minstrels for the Nile Street Mission of the Band of Hope; at which she sang and acted a song entitled 'Throw Down the Bottle and Never Drink Again,' which is said to have converted at least one member of the audience to the cause now enforced by law in America. It was similar audiences to her first audience that supported her to the last."

The song "It's a Bit of a Ruin that Cromwell Knocked about a Bit" was written for Lloyd in 1920-21 by Harry Bedford and Terry Sullivan; it features a drunken, working-class woman, rummaging through her bag and speaking in a strong Cockney accent (hence, TSE's phonetic spelling, "Abaht") about the ruins of a local abbey. The title and chorus is a pun on Oliver Cromwell, the former Lord Protectorate of England, and the Cromwell Arms, a public house where the woman had been "ruined" by alcohol. Lloyd first performed at Fairbank Church in Hoxton for the local chapter of the Band of Hope, a temperance organization for working-class children; in an interview with *The Strand* (Feb 1912), she recalled an audience member, who, on hearing her sing the traditional temperance anthem, "declared that he would never touch intoxicating liquors again" (199).

15†. In *Dial*: "There has been no such expressive figure"

16†. In *Dial*: "That is to say, it is themselves and their own life which find no expression in such a person as Marie Lloyd; nor have they any independent virtues as a class which might give them as a conscious class any dignity."

17†. In *Dial* and *Criterion*: "and the aristocracy are morally in fear of the middle class,"

18†. In *Dial*: "The lower classes still exist; but perhaps they will not exist for long."

19†. In *Dial*: "the artistic expression and dignity"; "not found for any life in the most elaborate"

20†. In *Dial*: "With the dwindling of the music-hall by the encouragement of the cheap and rapid-breeding cinema, the lower classes will tend to drop into the same state of amorphous protoplasm as the bourgeoisie."

21†. In *Dial*: "part of the work of acting"

22†. In *Dial*: "In a most interesting essay in the recent volume of *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia*, the great psychologist W. H. R. Rivers"; in *Criterion*: "in the recent volume of *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia*, the great psychologist W. H. R. Rivers"

23. Anthropologist and psychologist W. H. R. Rivers (1864-1922), whose next book TSE assigned for review in the *Criterion*, edited and contributed the final essay to *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia* (Cambridge UP, 1922), a volume intended to document the rapid decline in the native population of the South Pacific archipelago just east of Papua New Guinea. Rivers argues that "interest in life is the primary factor in the welfare of a people," and he concludes that the downfall of the Melanesian people is due to the prohibition of integral native

customs enforced by late-nineteenth-century European colonists, so that "the people were deprived of nearly all that gave interest to their lives" (96, 94).

24†. In *Dial*: "bedtime stories through a wireless receiver attached to both ears"; in *Criterion*: "bedtime stories through a wireless receiver attached to its ears"

25*†. TSE's note, added in *SE* (1932): "These lines were written nine years ago." In *Dial*: "the fate of the Melanesians. You will see that the death of Marie Lloyd has had a depressing effect, and that I am quite incapable of taking any interest in any literary events in England in the last two months, if any have taken place."

Lettre d'Angleterre: Le style dans la prose anglaise contemporaine[1]

La Nouvelle Revue française, 19 (1 Dec 1922) 751-56

On dit souvent qu'il n'existe pas en anglais une prose *étalon*. À l'analyse on découvre que cette critique pourrait se formuler plus exactement ainsi : la prose anglaise, si on la compare à la française, à l'italienne et à l'espagnole, s'est développée tard. Les formes premières qu'elle assuma visaient des emplois spéciaux et limités ; et lorsqu'on arrive à l'époque de Hobbes, la sensibilité et la pensée anglaise avaient déjà trouvé leur expression dans le vers : comparer le vers du temps de Shakespeare à la prose correspondante équivaut à comparer un esprit adulte et indépendant avec un esprit qui n'a encore atteint ni maturité ni indépendance. Aucune prose n'est jamais parvenue à rendre l'esprit anglais au degré où l'on peut dire que le style de Montaigne traduit l'esprit français : à des périodes diverses de notre histoire littéraire on retrouve le contraste de styles qui ont très peu de choses en commun. D'où la difficulté à n'importe quel moment d'assigner un style à une période donnée. Si nous lisons tout ce que la prose anglaise a produit de meilleur, nous pouvons arriver à savoir comment cette prose s'est développée ; mais nous nous apercevrons qu'il est très difficile de faire des généralisations à son sujet.

Néanmoins il demeure possible de suivre à travers le XIX^e^ siècle jusqu'à notre génération un ou deux courants et d'en marquer la disparition. Il est assez curieux de constater que les talents les plus originaux qui aient fait leur apparition dans notre littérature pendant la majeure partie du XIX^e^ siècle furent des prosateurs. Ni Tennyson, ni même Browning – et je n'avance ceci qu'après mûre délibération – ne peuvent prétendre à occuper une place de l'importance de celles de Ruskin, Newman, Arnold ou Dickens. C'est le style de Carlyle qui constitua la grande nouveauté. Jusque-là la prose habituellement en usage se rattachait à la tradition de Gibbon et de Johnson : le style de Macaulay est un style du XVIII^e^ siècle avili par une exubérance de journaliste et une émotion théâtrale ; le style de Landor est un style du XVIII^e^ siècle atteint de bizarrerie. Cependant le style de Landor est un beau style ; celui de Macaulay représente les résidus d'un beau style aux mains d'un démagogue littéraire. Carlyle – un intellectuel

sans intelligence, et un érudite sans culture – possédait une sensibilité unique et précieuse, qu'il exploita mais sans la discipliner ; toutefois, si une licence avouée vaut mieux qu'une dépravation qui se cache, son style est plus sain que celui de Macaulay. Les effets de telles orgies ne s'en laissent pas moins voir non seulement dans l'œuvre des descendants authentiques de Carlyle – comme George Meredith – mais même dans l'œuvre de ceux qui paraissent appartenir à un type d'esprit tout différent. La prose de tradition classique, pleine à la fois de dignité et d'aisance, dont le défaut résidait surtout dans la pompe et où l'antithèse constituait le procédé le plus fréquent, disparut. Thackeray est souvent diffus ; Ruskin souvent exagéré et vexatoire ; le cardinal Newman lui-même, à qui nous devons la plus belle prose qui ait été écrite au XIX^e^ siècle, est limité aux couleurs automnales de son émotion propre, particulière. Disons pour simplifier que même dans les cas où Carlyle n'est pas directement à l'origine de cette rupture d'équilibre de la prose anglaise, il sert encore de point de repère à l'aide duquel la mesurer.

À partir de ce moment il y a presque toujours dans la prose anglaise, même lorsqu'elle paraît le plus opposée à la prose de Carlyle, une certaine exagération, une limitation spéciale due à la prédominance de l'élément émotif, et pour ainsi dire une température légèrement fiévreuse. D'aucun écrivain ceci n'est plus vrai que de Walter Pater, de qui la prose forme le principal modèle qui eut cours dans les dix dernières années du XIX^e^ siècle et dans la première décade du XX^e^. L'influence de Walter Pater a eu pour résultat une limitation de la prose très différente de celle que l'on rencontre au XVII^e^ siècle. Les styles de Clarendon, Sir Thomas Browne, Jeremy Taylor et Hobbes sont tous des styles qui ont leurs limites et qui sont très différents les uns des autres ; mais chacun d'eux à l'intérieur des limites qui lui sont propres est un style équilibré et normal. Les thèmes de Walter Pater dénotent une sphère d'intérêts beaucoup plus étendue mais en dépit de cette extension, sa prose trouve ses limites dans les bornes mêmes que lui assigne une valeur toute émotionnelle.

Walter Pater était un descendant littéraire de Ruskin et de Matthew Arnold ; et même dans le tour d'esprit sévère, raisonné d'Arnold se laisse discerner parfois quelque éclat fiévreux. Une analyse de l'œuvre de Pater nous entraînerait trop loin ; je ne puis ici qu'affirmer combien fut grande son influence. On la retrouve dans l'œuvre d'écrivains aussi différents que MM. F. H. Bradley, Oscar Wilde et William Butler Yeats. Les livres de M. Bradley, en particulier *Apparence et Réalité* et *Les Principes de Logique*,

méritent d'être salués comme des classiques qui prennent rang dans la grande tradition des écrits philosophiques anglais ; mais même dans la magnifique austérité de la prose sèche et osseuse de M. Bradley on décèle par endroits cette rougeur de la fièvre qui est totalement étrangère à la tradition de Hobbes, Berkeley et Locke. L'ornementation étudiée d'Oscar Wilde et la simplicité étudiée de M. Yeats diffèrent également des écrits de M. Bradley, mais reflètent non moins également l'épicuréisme ascétique de Walter Pater. (Les mémoires de M. Yeats qui ont paru récemment dans le *New York Dial* constituent un document d'un très grand intérêt en ce qui concerne la génération d'Oscar Wilde ; et M. Yeats témoigne explicitement en faveur de l'influence exercée par Pater sur sa génération.)

L'influence de Pater, combinée avec celle de Renan, se retrouve entière dans un volume d'essais admirablement écrits mais déjà quelque peu anciens, dû à un écrivain de notre génération, Frédérick Manning, et intitulé : *Scènes et Portraits*. Cette influence de Pater culmine et disparaît à mon sens dans l'œuvre de James Joyce. Ce que j'avance ici est sujet à discussion ; je ne suis pas du tout sûr que M. Joyce souscrirait à cette analyse de ses origines, mais pour ma part je vois dans *Un Portrait de l'Artiste comme jeune homme* l'œuvre d'un disciple de Walter Pater aussi bien que d'un disciple du cardinal Newman. Dans *Ulysse* ce courant disparaît. Dans *Ulysse*, cette influence, – comme l'influence d'Ibsen et toutes les autres influences auxquelles M. Joyce s'est soumis, – est réduite à zéro. Mon opinion est qu'*Ulysse* n'est pas tant une œuvre qui ouvre une époque nouvelle que le gigantesque aboutissement d'une époque révolue. Avec ce livre Joyce atteint à un résultat singulier, singulièrement distingué, et peut-être unique en littérature : cette distinction consiste à ne pas avoir de style du tout, – et à ne pas en avoir, non pas au sens négatif, mais bien au contraire dans un sens très positif. Je veux dire que l'œuvre de M. Joyce n'est pas un pastiche, mais que néanmoins elle ne possède aucun des signes qui permettent de diagnostiquer la présence d'un style.

L'œuvre de M. Joyce met fin à la tradition de Walter Pater comme elle met fin à un grand nombre d'autres choses, et elle accentue par là la nécessité où se trouvent les écrivains de cette génération de prendre un nouveau départ, soit en se soumettant à une influence étrangère, soit en développant quelque tradition anglaise plus ancienne.

Il y a eu des écrivains très distingués qui sont demeurés étrangers à la généalogie que je viens de tracer ; à n'importe quelle époque des étrangers de ce genre peuvent toujours surgir dans les lettres anglaises. Henry James,

Joseph Conrad et Charles Doughty sont des écrivains qui possèdent des styles très personnels et incommunicables ; des styles que l'on peut imiter, comme on peut imiter celui de M. Proust, mais dont il est peu probable qu'ils servent de point de départ à une tradition.

Doughty est le moins connu de ces écrivains, en partie parce que son grand ouvrage *Voyages dans l'Arabie déserte* est difficile à se procurer et fort coûteux. Un bon essai sur la prose de M. Doughty – et qui renferme des citations – se trouve dans le livre récent de M. Middleton Murry, *Régions de l'Esprit*. L'œuvre de M. Doughty est étrangement isolée. Elle constitue une exception singulière au XIX^e^ siècle ; sa prose est presque une prose du XVII^e^ siècle ; et ses limites sont les limites du XVII^e^ siècle, et tout à fait différentes de celles de l'école de Walter Pater.

En présence d'un écrivain dont l'œuvre est encore en processus de formation, il est difficile de dire s'il constituera un cas isolé comme M. Doughty ou s'il deviendra l'ancêtre d'une époque comme Walter Pater. Les écrits de M. Wyndham Lewis s'offrent à nous aujourd'hui dans cet intéressant état d'ambiguïté. Je ne vois pas d'écrits contemporains au sujet desquels on puisse établir une comparaison avec ceux de M. Lewis ; j'ai vu cependant certains livres, surtout américains, dont le mérite – s'ils en possédaient un véritable – se rapprocherait du genre de mérite que l'on rencontre chez M. Lewis.

La prose de Wyndham Lewis se trouve ressembler à la prose d'une époque encore antérieure à celle qui est sympathique à M. Doughty. Ce dont elle se rapproche le plus, ce sont les prosateurs, non du XVII^e^ siècle, mais de la fin du XVI^e^, tels que Thomas Nashe, certains traducteurs du temps, et les auteurs des *Martin Marprelate tracts*. Cette prose a une abondance, une vigueur, une vitalité pleine de signification, une force vitupérative dont je ne vois pas ailleurs les équivalents. L'usage que M. Lewis fait des mots rappelle la façon dont ceux-ci affluent à un Falstaff. J'ai dit tout à l'heure « se trouve ressembler » parce que je suis sûr que M. Lewis n'a jamais particulièrement étudié les écrivains en question. Dans son premier roman, *Tarr*, l'influence de Dostoïevsky est visible et prépondérante. Mais la « partie Dostoïevsky » du livre, bien qu'exécutée brillamment et avec originalité, n'est pas vraiment représentative de M. Lewis ; l'autre élément présent dans l'ouvrage, et qui ne se raccorde nullement au précédent, relève de cet humour anglais, si sérieux et sauvage, auquel Baudelaire consacra naguère une brève étude. Lewis est très en sympathie avec Hogarth, Rowlandson et Cruikshank ; comme il est avant tout un peintre, son imagination est avant tout visuelle.

Il possède quelque chose de cet humour que l'on rencontre chez Dickens (lui aussi un écrivain visuel) lorsque Dickens est humoristique et non délibérément comique. Mais un répertoire d'analogies ne saurait en rien fournir une formule pour le style de M. Lewis, lequel, encore imparfait et pas tout à fait au point, se laisse voir au mieux dans l'essai sur l'art et l'architecture contemporains, intitulé *le Dessin du Calife*.

Si l'on examine ce qui se produit de meilleur dans le roman anglais contemporain, on trouve une tendance vers un autre style très différent de celui de M. Lewis, un style d'une nudité et d'une simplicité presque excessives. Ceci est particulièrement visible chez les écrivains que travaille un souci authentique du vocabulaire et de la syntaxe. Un très intéressant exemple nous en est offert dans *La Vie et la Mort de Harriet Frean* de Miss May Sinclair. Miss Sinclair a fait grand usage, le maximum d'usage possible, des résultats de la psychanalyse. Dans ce livre elle réduit le roman au strict essentiel ; elle a soin qu'aucune description, conversation ou monologue superflu ne vienne détourner l'attention du lecteur du tracé de la croissance et de la décadence de l'héroïne. Un autre écrivain qui tend toujours davantage à dépouiller son style de tout ornement surajouté est M. Stephen Hudson dans son livre *Eleanor Colhouse*. Il y a des moments où le récit de M. Hudson va jusqu'à vous faire oublier que le livre soit « écrit », dans n'importe quel sens du mot : il semble que l'on repasse simplement en esprit la morne chronique d'existences humaines. Cependant quoique cette méthode – qu'elle ait pour objet la documentation psychologique ou la chronique sans plus – soit visible chez d'autres écrivains, je ne saurais être sûr qu'elle représente une direction véritable, ni même que les écrivains cités ne puissent être amenés à y renoncer ; et lorsque je me rappelle certains écrivains intéressants comme Virginia Woolf et D. H. Lawrence que je juge impossibles à classer, j'ai envie de retirer toute espèce de généralisation. Dans l'œuvre de D. H. Lawrence, en particulier dans son dernier livre *La Verge d'Aaron*, se trouvent alliés la plus profonde exploration de la nature humaine et le style le plus inégal que j'aie rencontrés chez aucun écrivain de notre génération.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. This was the second of TSE's three contributions to the *NRF* under the title "Lettre d'Angleterre"; it was finished between 29 Aug and 9 Oct, according to editor Jacques Rivière's

letters to TSE. It was translated into French, as previously, by Charles du Bos, though TSE evidently did not see proofs. For the English version, which TSE revised and published in *Vanity Fair* in July 1923, see "Contemporary English Prose" (448). Significant differences between the French and English versions are recorded in the notes to the English text.

To the Editor of *The Daily Mail*[1]

The Daily Mail (8 Jan 1923) 8

Sir – It is so remarkable to find oneself in agreement with the policy of any newspaper on more than one point that I am writing to express my cordial approval of your attitude on nearly every public question of present importance.

Nothing could be more salutary at the present time than the remarkable series of articles which you have been publishing on Fascismo; these alone constitute a public service of the greatest value and would by themselves have impelled me to write to thank you.[2]

On the Ilford murder your attitude has been in striking contrast with the flaccid sentimentality of other papers I have seen, which have been so impudent as to affirm that they represented the great majority of the English people.[3]

On the Turkish question, and on other matters of foreign policy, you have manifested a temperance, sanity, and consistency which can but rarely be attributed to the Press – virtues, however, in which the Press ought to lead the public.[4] In an age in which the intellect is eclipsed alternately by passion and apathy, such virtues can hardly be over-estimated.

9 Clarence Gate Gardens, N.W. 1 T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. The letter, sent from TSE's residence at 9 Clarence Gate Gardens, N.W. 1, was published without its original date under the *Daily Mail*'s title, "Right On All Points"; it is also reprinted in *L2* (7-8).

2. Founded by Benito Mussolini on 25 Mar 1919 as a revolutionary movement against Bolshevik and Communist control of Italy, the Fascisti came to military strength in 1921 and achieved an overthrow in late Oct 1922, when Mussolini was made prime minister by King Victor Emmanuel III. From 19 Dec 1922 to 5 Jan, American-born war correspondent Sir Percival Phillips sent from Rome a series of fourteen articles on the Fascisti's success printed under the title "The 'Red' Dragon and the Blackshirts," which the *Mail* commissioned and praised for its account of "a passage in contemporary history as great and inspiring as the resurrection of Italy under Garibaldi." Subtitled "How Italy Found her Soul" and issued as a pamphlet at the end of 1922, Sir Percival's early chronicle was presented as "the first complete and authentic English account of the famous Fascistic movement," a romanticized account later altered by Mussolini's

dictatorship and radical transformation of Fascism from 1925 until Italy joined the Axis powers and declared war on Britain and France in June 1940.

3. On 11 Dec 1922, Mrs. Edith Thompson and her much younger paramour Freddy Bywaters of Ilford, Essex, were found guilty of murdering her husband and sentenced to death, a sentence supported by the *Mail*, which held that public sympathy should be with the victim, not the murderers. Between then and their execution by hanging on 9 Jan, the growing national sentiment for their reprieve prompted the *Daily Sketch* to organize a campaign in England's largest cities for a million-signature petition against their death sentence. On the same page as TSE's letter, the *Mail* reiterated its position: "And looking back on the crusade of sentimentalism which succeeded the jury's verdict, the country may congratulate itself on having a Home Secretary capable of carrying out a very painful duty with due firmness."

4. The Lausanne Peace Conference, convened to establish a treaty between the Allies and Turkey in the aftermath of the Greco-Turkish War of 1919-22, had opened on 21 Nov 1922 and was presently deadlocked over numerous issues, including Turkey's resistance to supervision of a demilitarized zone in the Straits; its demand for the return of Mosul, the Turkish oil center occupied by the British in Nov 1918 and incorporated into the new Arab state of Iraq; its determination to expel Greek subjects from Constantinople; and its refusal to agree to the Allied demand for judicial safeguards for minorities. The *Mail* supported the tough positions of the British Foreign Secretary throughout negotiations until a treaty was signed on 24 July, preparing the way for the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey on 29 Oct.

To the Literary Editor of *The Chicago Daily News*[1]

Sir,

According to your issue of the 21st of February, Mr. Ben Hecht has stated that he met me in London, and added that he knows that I thoroughly hate Americans and everything they write and read.[2] Mr. Ben Hecht has never met me in London or anywhere else, and I hope that you will kindly publish this fact as I think that if it is brought to Mr. Hecht's notice he is not likely in future ever to want to meet me. I do not know what credit is usually given in Chicago to Mr. Hecht's statements but I trust that your readers will observe that as Mr. Hecht has on a point of fact said a thing that is not,[3] it is superfluous for me even to contradict the further statements which Mr. Hecht has made about me.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

[T. S. ELIOT]

NOTES

1. This letter, dated 20 Mar 1923 and sent from 9 Clarence Gate Gdns (see *L2* 83), was not actually published; the literary editor of the *Chicago Daily News*, Harry Hansen (1884-1977), summarized it and added the following critical comment in his weekly column of 11 Apr 1923: "However, we have heard so often of Mr. Eliot's contempt for American writing that we shall be glad to give him space to explain his views if he wishes to do so" (14).

2. The novelist, dramatist, and screenwriter Ben Hecht (1894-1964), a columnist for the *Chicago Daily News*, had just founded his own biweekly paper, the *Chicago Literary Times*, the first issue of which appeared on 26 Feb 1923, declaring "open season" on American authors and artists. His remarks on Eliot and *The Waste Land*, made during a warm-up for the new paper at Schlogl's restaurant, were quoted in Hansen's column of 21 Feb: "The poem has certain merits in it," said Hecht, "as is natural in a poem written by a big man like Eliot, but it differs so radically from his work in 'Prufrock' and other poems that I have no doubt that it was carefully planned by Eliot as a hoax on the American public. I met Eliot in London and know that he thoroughly hates Americans and everything they write and read and would consider him wholly capable of hoaxing the *Dial* and all its friends" (14).

3. In Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* IV. iii, Gulliver recalls his conversation with a Houyhnhnm: "He replied, that I must needs be mistaken, or that I *said the thing which was not*. (For they have no word in their language to express lying or falsehood)." *Gulliver's Travels, The Tale of a Tub, and The Battle of the Books* (Oxford UP, 1919), 279.

Dramatis Personae[1]

The Criterion: A Quarterly Review, 1 (Apr 1923) 303-06

The death and the funeral of Sarah Bernhardt are events important not so much because of the loss of a great actress as because they mark the termination of an epoch. The epoch was already over, but Bernhardt's death gave, as we had known for years that it would give, the official date for the "Closing of the Theatres."[2] It is a commonplace that in France the theatre has been, up to and into our time, far more nearly the public institution which the theatre should be than in any other country; and Bernhardt represented for the world outside of France, and finally for France itself, the genius of the French stage. As long as Bernhardt was alive we were not forced to admit that the traditional French theatre was a survival. The Théâtre du Vieux Colombier (though it could hardly be called a revolutionary enterprise),[3] and other theatres of the same tendency, were obviously a sign of dissatisfaction within the heart of Paris itself – a city more than any other loyal to its institutions. And last year M. Cocteau was saying:

> Le cirque, le music-hall, le cinématographe et ces entreprises qui, depuis Serge de Diaghilew, mettent de puissants véhicules aux mains des jeunes, autant de forces qui conspirent, sans même connaître leur entente, contre ce que le théâtre est devenu, savoir: un vieil album de photographies.[4]

Such statements will shortly be incontestable. I doubt whether the funeral of any other representative of the nineteenth century stage will be the event that Bernhardt's was.

We may still, no doubt, take a certain pleasure in the Guitrys, especially if we have the prudence to see them in London rather than in Paris.[5] They will always be interesting here if only because they demonstrate the extraordinary clumsiness of English actors who imitate them. Even so the collapse is imminent. If there must be telephoning on the stage, Lucien and Sacha Guitry know how to do it better than anybody, and they are only in London for a short season now and then; but the spectacle of Seymour

Hicks telephoning for months on end is enough to discredit the use of that instrument altogether.[6]

The chaos of the modern stage is a chaos of styles of acting as much as of types of play. One interesting accident of the Phoenix Society performances – and I say it without reproach to that wholly commendable enterprise – is the way in which they bring to light this histrionic anarchy.[7] The Society presents plays most of which have never been performed within living memory, and plays of so remote a time that we have only the vaguest notion of the style of acting then in practice. We do not know exactly what kind of acting the playwright had in mind when he wrote, or what appealed to the contemporary audience. The play remains, but the Elizabethan theatre is gone for ever; we know as little about it as we do about stained glass work. The actors in the Phoenix Society, therefore, have all the same handicap. They are good actors, representative of the best of the English stage to-day; they have been acting separately and in plays of different kinds during the week. Furthermore, there is not time, in the preparation of a play to be performed only twice, for the actors to be all drilled into carrying out the conception of one person. So we get treatments of different parts in the same piece, in different and sometimes incompatible manners. I have in mind, in the excellent production of *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, the brilliant work of Ion Swinley and Michael Sherbrooke.[8] The latter (in spite of his Potash and Perlmutter delivery)[9] was one of the best realistic villains I have ever seen: radiating simple energy of evil over the whole stage. Michael Sherbrooke was not an actor, he was an illusionist; it was Ford's personage in the flesh. Ion Swinley, on the other hand, is always an actor; he makes himself into a figure, a marionette; his acting is abstract and simplified. The two men, on the same stage, were beings from different worlds, could not combine in any common action.

So inchoate is the theatre, which, if realised, would be the theatre of our generation, that we can only guess at the scheme of what we grope for by inference from our perceptions, from observation of any instant on the stage which has aroused an hitherto dormant feeling. Mr. Swinley, I feel, with his mask-like beauty, belongs to this unrealised stage; at the same moment I regret that he has not had the training in movement and gesture – the only training in movement and gesture – the training of ballet. For his physical type is not dissimilar to that of Leonid Massine, who seems to me the greatest actor whom we have in London.[10] Massine, the most completely unhuman, impersonal, abstract, belongs to the future stage.

Swinley's face and his pose are at war with the conventional school of acting in which (I presume) he was trained; and the difference between the conventional gesture of the ordinary stage, which is supposed to *express* emotion, and the abstract gesture of Massine, which *symbolises* emotion, is enormous. The former is usually untrue, and always monotonous: the movements of an able and intelligent actor, Mr. Basil Holloway, illustrate this monotony.[11] The realism of the ordinary stage is something to which we can no longer respond, because to us it is no longer realistic. We know now that the gesture of daily existence is inadequate for the stage; instead of pretending that the stage gesture is a copy of reality, let us adopt a literal untruth, a thorough-going convention, a ritual. For the stage – not only in its remote origins, but always – is a ritual, and the failure of the contemporary stage to satisfy the craving for ritual is one of the reasons why it is not a living art.

(In the cinema, which has perpetuated and exaggerated the most threadbare devices of stage expression, the failure is most apparent. It is a delusion of cinema producers, apparently, that the film, merely because it is a series of photographs, is a realistic medium. The egregious merit of Chaplin is that he has escaped in his own way from the realism of the cinema and invented a *rhythm*.[12] Of course the unexplored opportunities of the cinema for eluding realism must be very great.)

The contrast made by Massine, after an hour of the tinned, preserved, and cold-stored humour of a New York revue, is a reminder that there is life, as well as machinery. The New York revue, *You'd be Surprised*, if this is a fair specimen, must be something which never had life at all; and I would prefer to emphasise the contrast between the art of Massine and the art of other actors which was living for its time.[13] The art of acting is obviously not one thing for all time any more (but rather less) than other arts; the art of every actor is in relation to his own age, and would perhaps be unintelligible to any other. But as the age is not an instant, but an indefinite span of time including part of both past and future, we can still, with our retrospective selves, appreciate such acting as that of Bernhardt, though we move toward satisfaction in the direction in which moves Leonid Massine.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Written between 29 Mar and 2 Apr 1923, when TSE delivered the last pages of *Criterion* 1:3 to the printers (*L2* 100).

2. Actress Sarah Bernhardt (1844-1923) died in Paris on 26 Mar after a lingering illness. Hundreds of thousands of mourners lined the streets on 29 Mar for the funeral procession. A requiem mass was held for her in Westminster Cathedral on 10 Apr. TSE compares the end of Bernhardt's epoch to the closing of England's theatres by the Puritan government's ordinance in 1642.

3. For the Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier, see TSE's "London Letter: July, 1921" (362).

4. *Trans*: "The circus, the music-hall, the cinema, and those other enterprises which, since the advent of Serge de Diaghilev, have provided our younger men with great opportunities, are so many forces conspiring together, in an unconscious alliance, against the present-day theatre, which is now nothing but an old photograph album." Jean Cocteau, *Le Secret professional* (1922), translated as "Professional Secrets" in *A Call to Order*, trans. Rollo H. Myers (London: Faber & Gwyer, 1926), 174-75. By Sept 1923, Cocteau had promised a contribution to the *Criterion*, but his one appearance, "Scandales," was delayed until Jan 1926 (*L2* 207, 233).

5. TSE first discusses the popular comedies of Lucien and Sacha Guitry in "The Possibility of a Poetic Drama" (282-83).

6. The actor-manager Seymour Hicks (1871-1949) adapted one of the Guitry's most popular plays, *Faisons un rêve* (1916), as *Sleeping Partners*, which had a four-month run from 31 Dec 1917 to 20 Apr 1918. Hicks played a young man who comically pursues a married woman over the telephone.

7. For TSE's early support of the society, see his letter to the editor of the *Athenauem*, "The Phoenix Society" (193).

8. The Phoenix Society produced John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (1633) at the Shaftesbury Theatre on 28-29 Jan 1923, with actors Ion Swinley as Giovanni and Michael Sherbrooke (1874-1957) as the villainous Vasques, who double-crosses, murders, and blinds various characters in the service of his master's interests.

9. The comic characters Abraham ("Abe") Potash and Morris ("Mawruss") Perlmutter, German-Jewish immigrants and moguls of the garment-industry who combat competitors and shysters, were originally created by American humorist Montague Glass, who adapted their adventures for the stage in *Potash and Perlmutter*. The three-act play opened in New York in 1913 and played at the Queen's Theatre, London, in Apr 1914, with sequels in Sept 1916 and Apr 1919.

10. TSE had first seen Léonide Massine perform with the Ballets Russes on 13 May 1919 at the Alhambra. On 22 July, he attended the London premiere of Falla's *The Three-Cornered Hat*, which Massine choreographed, and in Nov, he saw Massine perform again as the Chinese Conjurer in Cocteau's *Parade*. In the summer of 1921, he attended the first of three performances of Massine's newly choreographed *Le Sacre du printemps* by Stravinsky. Massine had left the Ballets Russes and taken residence in London by 1922, where he performed a series of *divertissements* – including Stravinsky's *Ragtime* and Strauss's *Fanatics of Pleasure* – regularly at the Covent Garden. TSE saw him there in Apr 1922 and "thought him more brilliant and beautiful than ever . . . I want to meet him more than ever, and he is a genius" (*L1* 666-67). When they met through the offices of Mary Hutchinson on 22 June, he wrote to her with gratitude: "I liked Massine very much indeed – with no disappointment – and hope that I shall see him again" (*L1* 680). Since 24 Jan 1923, Massine had been performing with George Robey in the revue *You'd Be Surprised* at the Covent Garden, where TSE arranged for a copy of this article to be sent to him (*L2* 109).

11. The Shakespearean actor Baliol Holloway (1883-1967) played several roles in Phoenix Society productions, most recently Barabas in *The Jew of Malta* at Daly's Theatre in Nov 1922 and Subtle in *The Alchemist* at the Regent in Mar 1923.

12. The music hall and film actor-director Charlie Chaplin (1889-1977) had in 1919 become a founder of United Artists film distribution company in Hollywood, thereby ensuring his independence as a filmmaker. His recent silent films included *Pay Day* (1922) and *The Pilgrim* (1923).

13. Sir Oswald Stoll's *You'd Be Surprised* opened at the Royal Opera House on 22 Jan 1923 for 270 performances and featured music hall turns as well as the dancing of both Massine and Lopokova. Massine wrote and choreographed two numbers for the revue: *Chinese Dance* and *Togo; or, The Noble Savage*, a one-off Amerindian ballet set in Arizona. "It was an amusing commentary on the translation of our national opera house into a music-hall," wrote the *Times* reviewer (29 Jan), who thought the fifteen turns "ill-arranged" and mediocre, "that the two best and most appreciated items in the programme should be a charming *ballet* performed by M. Leonide Massine, Mlle. Lydia Lopokova, and others. . . . In the last scene M. Massine and Mlle. Lopokova carry out three dances to music by Strauss, and in these both take every opportunity . . . of revealing their amazing skill" (8).

To the Literary Editor of *The Globe and Commercial Advertiser*[1]

The Globe and Commercial Advertiser (17 Apr 1923) 16

Sir: I have received a cutting from your issue of March 6 in which you quote from the *Chicago News* some statements about myself which are asserted to have been made by Mr. Ben Hecht.[2] According to this cutting Mr. Hecht says that he met me in London, and knows that I thoroughly hate Americans and everything they write and read, and that he considers me wholly capable of hoaxing the *Dial* and all its friends. In case there may be any one in America who believes this statement, I wish to inform you that if Mr. Hecht made the remarks attributed to him in the *Chicago News* he is a liar. I should be glad if you would make this public.

Mr. Hecht has never met me in London or anywhere else. He has not the slightest ground for the opinions which he assigns to me, and he must be perfectly aware of this fact. I can only presume that Mr. Hecht believes that my being 3,000 miles away will protect him from any legal action, as it certainly protects him from any physical action on my part. I do not know whether Mr. Hecht is the author or merely the supporter of the libel which charges me with having hoaxed the *Dial*, but at least he appears to have found it necessary to lie about me in order to give substance to this rumor. If Mr. Hecht has succeeded in hoaxing anybody with such a clumsy falsehood as that reported in the *Chicago News*, it would hardly be worth my while to spend two years' labor upon a poem in order to hoax the *Dial*.
I am, sir, yours faithfully,

9 Clarence Gate Gardens, N.W. 1 T. S. ELIOT[3]

NOTES

1. TSE sent the carbon of this letter, dated 6 Apr 1923, to John Quinn, who had evidently sent him the cutting from the *Globe and Commercial Advertiser* (New York). TSE added in a note: "*Very* grateful to you" (*L2* 104-05).

2. Hecht's statement had been reported in the *Chicago Daily News* on 21 Feb. It was reprinted in the *Globe* of 6 Mar by N. P. Dawson in his weekly column "Books in Particular," in which Dawson exclaimed in disbelief, "And he has the Dial's award of $2,000!" (16).

3. Dawson agreed to print TSE's letter in his *Globe* column, writing: "We are all for peace. But since it is customary to print 'corrections,' space must be given for the following letter." He then commented immediately below TSE's signature: "'The Waste Land,' of course, is just the kind of a poem to which the Dial would give an award. Although we recall that one of Mr. Eliot's swooning admirers said . . . that the award was not given to Mr. Eliot because of 'The Waste Land,' but because of a number of – er – er – a number of things. 'The Waste Land' will always remain for us a joyous episode" (16).

John Donne

A review of *Love Poems of John Donne*

Soho: Nonesuch Press, 1923. Pp. xxiii + 91.

The Nation and the Athenaeum, 33 (9 June 1923) 331-32[1]

The appearance of a very fine edition of Donne's love poems provokes an inquiry into the reasons for Donne's present popularity; for it is such an edition as only a poet highly esteemed by a prosperous public could receive.[2] For the production, the Nonesuch Press deserves every compliment; for the compilation, there are only two reserves to be made. It is questionable whether the love poems should be published separately from the rest of Donne's poems; and it is questionable whether an editor ought to tamper with the sequence in which the poems are printed.[3] If these two licences are allowed – that of selection and that of order – it may be admitted that the editor of this volume has shown excellent taste (though the present writer prefers to see "The Relic" and "The Funeral," the first verses of which are variations of the same theme, printed farther apart).[4] But selection and order represent a criticism, the imposition of a critical taste upon the reader; it was by such means that Matthew Arnold, in a volume which still supplies to many readers their only knowledge of Wordsworth, imposed a criticism upon the nineteenth century.[5] For Donne the danger is much less: he is less difficult and less voluminous than Wordsworth, and most of his admirers, we presume, already own the Muses' Library edition. But the arrangement made, and very neatly made, in this volume is a kind of pigeon-holing of Donne's sentiments.

> First in order come the great love poems, expressing absolute, static and ecstatic love; then, the lighter ones on wooing and winning and the joy of the senses; then, those that deal with parting and grief; then, the more or less disillusioned and cynical analyses of love and lovers; and finally, the poems in which earthly and heavenly love are contrasted – and compared.

So much for the order. As for the selection, the editor explains: –

> The selection has been confined to Donne's subjective poetry and does not include any of the conventional complimentary Letters and Epithalamia, which were made to order after the fashion of his time. [89]

Both these statements contain interesting critical judgments; and, as all critical judgments excite criticism, we may be allowed to hold these up to question. One of the characteristics of Donne which wins him, I fancy, his interest for the present age, is his fidelity to emotion as he finds it; his recognition of the complexity of feeling and its rapid alterations and antitheses. A change of feeling, with Donne, is rather the regrouping of the same elements under a mood which was previously subordinate: it is not the substitution of one mood for a wholly different one. As an example of the latter process, we may take *Don Juan*, turn to "The Isles of Greece," and observe the shift of tone after that splendid piece of nationalist propaganda

> Thus sung, or would or could or should have sung,
> The modern Greek, in tolerable verse. . . .[6]

Byron's "effective" change here is not only a theatrical effect: it is callowness masquerading as maturity of cynicism; it represents an uninteresting mind, and a disorderly one. Compare it with those of Baudelaire, certainly a master of surprises: in the French poet every new mood is prepared by and implicit in the preceding mood – the mind has unity and order. And so with Donne. Impossible to isolate his ecstasy, his sensuality, and his cynicism.

Impossible, furthermore, to isolate what is "conventional" in Donne from what is individual. If the "Autumnal," which is included in this volume, be admitted to be a love poem, are we yet safe in separating it from "conventional complimentary" poems?[7] Such separation can only be made, at best, by appeal to biographical data, which are, for the literary value, irrelevant. The epithet "conventional," like the epithet "tour de force," is equally easy and dangerous to apply: it might be made a censor for some, if not all, of Shakespeare's sonnets. The editor would have been on safer ground, had he said bluntly that some of Donne's verse is insignificant. With sincerity in the practical sense, poetry has little to do; the poet is responsible to a much more difficult consciousness and honesty. And it is

because he has this honesty, because he is so often expressing his genuine whole of tangled feelings, that Donne is, like the early Italians, like Heine, like Baudelaire, a poet of the world's literature.

There are two ways in which we may find a poet to be modern: he may have made a statement which is true everywhere and for all time (so far as "everywhere" and "for all time" have meaning), or there may be an accidental relationship between his mind and our own. The latter is fashion; we are all susceptible to fashion in literature as in everything else, and we all require some indulgence for it. The age of Donne, and the age of Marvell, are sympathetic to us, and it demands a considerable effort of dissociation to decide to what degree we are deflected toward him by local or temporary bias. The question is all the more puzzling because Donne's popularity is neither recent nor limited: he has been approved, for many years, by Mr. Edmund Gosse and Professor Le Roy Barron Briggs;[8] and he receives close attention from some of the most interesting younger poets. And again, it is impossible to say to what extent the interest in Jacobean and Caroline poetry is not due to Mr. Saintsbury – whose catholicity of taste is beyond a doubt.[9] It is difficult, and indeed irrelevant, to discover why any one critic admires Donne; one is content to believe that they all appreciate his excellence. But it is possible to conjecture why Donne should be fashionable, as well as appreciated, in the present age.

The age objects to the heroic and sublime, and it objects to the simplification and separation of the mental faculties. The objections are largely well grounded, and react against the nineteenth century; they are partly – how far I do not inquire – a product of the popularization of the study of mental phenomena. Ethics having been eclipsed by psychology, we accept the belief that any state of mind is extremely complex, and chiefly composed of odds and ends in constant flux manipulated by desire and fear. When, therefore, we find a poet who neither suppresses nor falsifies, and who expresses complicated states of mind, we give him welcome. And when we find his poetry containing everywhere potential or actual *wit*, our thirst has been relieved. To inquire why we now demand the presence of wit in poetry – or of something for which this seventeenth-century term has been revived.

The process which has carried us so far will carry us farther. The heroic and sublime, banished as reality, we take back as myth: Mr. Bloom is Ulysses.[10] The pursuit of mental states is likely to bring us to the farthest extreme from the realism of the later nineteenth century. But, meanwhile, those who take Donne as a contemporary will be taking him as a fashion

only. Neither the fantastic (Clevelandism is becoming popular)[11] nor the cynical nor the sensual occupies an excessive importance with Donne; the elements in his mind had an order and congruity. The range of his feeling was great, but no more remarkable than its unity. He was altogether present in every thought and in every feeling. It is the same kind of unity as pervades the work of Chapman, for whom thought is an intense feeling which is one with every other feeling. Compared with these men, almost every nineteenth-century English poet is in some way limited or deformed. It is this limitation which makes them seem to us in some way immature, and which, while it allows them to occupy an important place in English literature, deprives most of their work of a place in the literature of the world. And when their poetry pretended the most licence it was – as Swinburne's or Dowson's – the most restricted.

Our appreciation of Donne must be an appreciation of what we lack, as well as of what we have in common with him. What is true of his mind is true, in different terms, of his language and versification. A style, a rhythm, to be significant, must embody a significant mind, must be produced by the necessity of a new form for a new content. For this reason the extraordinary virtuosity of Tennyson is of little use to us. And for this reason, I suspect, most contemporary verse is so uninteresting in rhythm and so poor or so extravagant in vocabulary. The labour of composition for a poet to-day is very great, and the amount of time that he must expend on experiment unlimited. Verse and language have not kept up with economic progress, and have halted behind the development of sensibility. The dogmatic slumbers of the last hundred years are broken, and the chaos must be faced: we cannot return to sleep and call it order, and we cannot have any order but our own, but from Donne and his contemporaries we can draw instruction and encouragement.[12]

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. This was TSE's first contribution to the *Nation and the Athenaeum* (*N&A*), which began in Feb 1921 when John Middleton Murry's struggling *Athenaeum* was absorbed by the *Nation*, a much larger weekly. On 7 Apr 1921, TSE wrote to Aldington of "the downfall of the *Athenaeum* and its more and more complete extinction in the *Nation*" (*L1* 549).

2. Printed in seventeenth-century type on handmade paper in an edition of 1,250 copies, this was the first publication by Nonesuch Press, founded in 1923 by Francis Meynell with the help of David Garnett and Vera Mendel. It produced fine limited editions at lower prices by relying on the newly revived classic types available to commercial presses.

3. Following the practice of the first collected edition of 1633, most editors had arranged Donne's poems by categories, such as love elegies or songs and sonnets. Editor Viola Meynell (1885-1956) explains in a note at the end of the volume: "The choice and arrangement of these poems is based on their aesthetic and psychological interest for the modern reader and does not follow any of the earlier editions" (89).

4. The speakers of both poems – which appear side by side on pages 47 and 48 in this edition – envision themselves posthumously with a lover's keepsake; one with a "subtle wreath of hair, which crowns my arm" ("The Funeral"), the other with "a bracelet of bright hair about the bone" ("The Relic").

5. Arnold selected the contents and wrote the preface to *Poems of Wordsworth* (London: Macmillan, 1879).

6. From Byron's *Don Juan*, Canto III (1821), stanza 87. These lines immediately follow the court poet's recitation of the patriotic lyric, "The Isles of Greece," which contrasts the former greatness of Greece with its modern degeneracy.

7. "Autumnal" is often printed as an elegy and is identified in some early manuscripts and by Isaac Walton in his *Life of George Herbert* as a tribute to George Herbert's mother, Magdalen.

8. Gosse's two-volume biography, *The Life and Letters of John Donne, Dean of St. Paul's*, appeared in 1899. TSE took a course at Harvard with Professor L. B. R. Briggs (1855-1934), whose "great persuasiveness and charm" in reading Donne's verse, he later recalled, "were enough to attract to private reading at least one Freshman." "Donne in Our Time," *A Garland for John Donne*, ed. Theodore Spencer (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1931), 3.

9. George Saintsbury published his three-volume anthology, *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period*, between 1905 and 1921.

10. Leopold Bloom is the modern counterpart to the ancient Homeric hero in Joyce's *Ulysses*.

11. Dryden defines "Clevelandism" as "wresting and torturing a word into another meaning" in the opening pages of "An Essay on Dramatic Poesy." *Dramatic Essays* (London: Dent, 1912), 7. TSE described Cleveland's tendency to indulge in fanciful successions of images for their own sake in "Andrew Marvell" (312).

12. TSE echoes Kant's claim in the *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics* (1783) that David Hume awakened him from his "dogmatic slumber." *Kant's Prolegomena*, trans. Paul Carus (London: Kegan Paul, 1902), 7.

Ben Jonson[1]

To the Editor of *The Nation and the Athenaeum*

The Nation and the Athenaeum, 33 (30 June 1923) 426

Sir – In some interesting remarks on Ben Jonson in *The Nation and Athenaeum* of June 23rd – with which I am otherwise in accord – I observe that you refer to me as seeming to have praised Jonson "apologetically."[2] My article was intended as a "defence" only in so far as I believed Jonson's reputation – as evidenced by manuals of literates, such as you yourself quote[3] – was a misrepresentation; and in this belief, I should imagine, you concur. And theoretically I agree that the only "defence" necessary for Jonson is to "tell people to read him." But this is equally the only defence necessary for a number of other writers; and a great deal depends on the persuasiveness of the way in which one tells people to read them. But if any defence, further than an oracular invitation to the public to read an author, implies that the author defended is weak or vulnerable, then my paper on Jonson was by no means intended as a defence or an apology. On the contrary, Jonson seems to me to have a particularly strong position.

Yours, etc.,

9 Clarence Gate Gardens, N. W. 1 T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Dated 23 June 1923; the title was supplied by the editors of *N&A*.

2. TSE praised Jonson in two 1919 essays that were combined in *SW* as "Ben Jonson" (150). Leonard Woolf, writing in "The World of Books" (23 June 1923) about a new edition of *Ben Jonson's Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden* (1923), claimed: "Most critics since Hazlitt seem to consider some apology necessary for praising the author of 'Volpone'; . . . even Mr. T. S. Eliot, and after him Aldous Huxley, seem to praise Jonson apologetically. The tone seems to me incongruous and unnecessary. . . . The only defence of Jonson which is necessary is to tell people to read him" (396).

3. Woolf quotes John Buchan's claim, from the newly published *A History of English Literature* (London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1923), that Jonson lacked "true genius" (396).

The Function of a Literary Review[1]

The Criterion: A Quarterly Review, 1 (July 1923) 421

On the completion of the first volume of the *Criterion*, it is pertinent to define, and perhaps to defend, the purpose of a literary review. For in our time the pursuit of literary perfection, and the preoccupation with literature and art for their own sake, are objects of attack, no longer in the name of "morals," but in the name of a much more insidious catchword: "life."[2] I say "more dangerous," because the term "morals," at worst, stands for some order or system, even if a bad one; whereas "life," with much vaguer meaning, and therefore much greater possibilities of unctiousness, may be merely a symbol of chaos. Those, however, who affirm an antinomy between "literature," meaning any literature which can appeal only to a small and fastidious public, and "life," are not only flattering the complacency of the half-educated, but asserting a principle of disorder.

It is not, certainly, the function of a literary review to provide material for the chat of coteries – nor is a review called upon to avoid such appeal. A literary review should maintain the application, in literature, of principles which have their consequences also in politics and in private conduct; and it should maintain them without tolerating any confusion of the purposes of pure literature with the purposes of politics or ethics.

In the common mind all interests are confused, and each degraded by the confusion. And where they are confused, they cannot be related; in the common mind any specialised activity is conceived as something isolated from life, an odious task or a pastime of mandarins. To maintain the autonomy, and the disinterestedness, of every human activity, and to perceive it in relation to every other, require a considerable discipline. It is the function of a literary review to maintain the autonomy and disinterestedness of literature, and at the same time to exhibit the relations of literature – not to "life," as something contrasted to literature, but to all the other activities, which, together with literature, are the components of life.

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. Printed under the general title, "NOTES," and followed by a paragraph titled "Literature and the 'Honnête Homme,'" by assistant editor Richard Aldington. The section "NOTES" was permanently replaced by "A Commentary" in the issue of Apr 1924.

2. TSE refers to the inaugural essay of the newly launched journal *The Adelphi*, in which editor John Middleton Murry affirms the new monthly's unifying principle: "We believe in life. Just that. And to reach that belief, to hold it firm and unshakable, has been no easy matter for some of us." He continues: "*The Adelphi* is nothing if it is not an act. It is not a business proposition, or a literary enterprise, or a nice little book in a pretty yellow cover; it is primarily and essentially an assertion of a faith that may be held in a thousand different ways, a faith that life is important, and that more life should be man's chief endeavour." "The Cause of It All" (June 1923), 5, 8.

Contemporary English Prose[1]

A Discussion of the Development of English Prose from Hobbes and Sir Thomas Browne to Joyce and D. H. Lawrence

Vanity Fair, 20 (July 1923) 51, 98

It is often said that there is in English no standard prose style. A more analytic statement of this criticism might be as follows: English prose, in comparison with that of the French, Italian and Spanish languages, developed late. Its early forms were constructed for special and limited uses; and by the time of Hobbes, English sensibility and thought had already expressed themselves in verse: to compare the verse of the time of Shakespeare with its prose is to compare an adult and independent mind with an immature and dependent one. No prose style has ever succeeded in comprehending the English mind even to the extent to which the style of Montaigne contains the French mind; hence at several periods the contrast of styles of minds which have very little in common. Hence the difficulty, at any moment, of assigning a style to that moment. If we read *all* of the best English prose, we may know how English prose has developed; but we shall find it very difficult to make any generalisations about it.

Nevertheless, we can trace one or two currents in the nineteenth century down to our own generation, and mark their disappearance. Curiously enough, the most original talents in our literature of the greater part of that century were prose talents; neither Tennyson nor even Browning – I speak with deliberation – can occupy the place of importance of Ruskin, Newman, Arnold or Dickens. The great novelty was (perhaps) the style of Carlyle.[2†] Hitherto the usual prose style had followed in the tradition of Gibbon and of Johnson; the style of Macaulay is an eighteenth century style debased by journalistic exuberance and theatrical emotion; the style of Landor is an eighteenth century style affected by quaintness. Nevertheless Landor's is a fine style; Macaulay's is the remains of a fine style in the hands of a literary demagogue. Carlyle – a man of intellect without intelligence, and erudition without culture – had a unique and precious sensibility, which he exploited but did not train; but if open licence is better than concealed depravity, his style is healthier than Macaulay's.

THE FEVER OF CARLYLE

The effect of his orgy, however, is visible not only in the work of his authentic descendents – such as George Meredith – but even in the work of those who appear to be of quite another type of mind. The dignified and easy prose style of the classical tradition, of which the chief fault was pomposity, and the most frequent trick antithesis, disappeared. Thackeray is often diffuse; Ruskin often exaggerated and perverse; even Cardinal Newman, the possessor of the finest prose style of the nineteenth century, is limited to the autumnal coloring of his peculiar personal emotion. None of these writers, except Ruskin, can be said to have been influenced by Carlyle; and Ruskin, in vocabulary, structure and sensibility, is indeed very different from Carlyle; nevertheless, they all have something in common with him.[3†]

Perhaps the simplest thing to say is that Carlyle partly originates and partly marks the disturbances in the equilibrium of English prose style.[4†] In English prose thereafter, no matter how antithetical to the prose of Carlyle it may be there is usually some exaggeration, some peculiar emotional limitation,[5†] as it were a slightly feverish temperature, and of no other writer is this more true than of Walter Pater, whose prose was the model for the last ten years of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth. The result, the effect of Walter Pater's influence, has been in the limitation of prose style to particular moods or things, such as one finds in the seventeenth century.[6†] The styles of Clarendon, Sir Thomas Browne, Jeremy Taylor and Hobbes are all limited styles and very different from each other; but each within its own limitations is a very balanced and normal style. Walter Pater has a much wider range, but throughout that range his prose is restricted by its limited emotional range rather than by limited subject matter.[7†]

THE INFLUENCE OF PATER

Walter Pater was a literary descendant of Ruskin and Matthew Arnold; and even in the severe and reasoned wit of Arnold there is an occasional feverish glow. An analysis of the work of Pater would lead too far: I must content myself here with merely affirming his great influence. One will find it in the work of writers so different as Mr. F. H. Bradley, Oscar Wilde and William Butler Yeats. Mr. Bradley's books, especially *Appearance and Reality* and *Principles of Logic*, deserve to be recognized as classics in the great tradition of English philosophical writing; but even in the magnificent austerity of Mr. Bradley's dry and boney prose one recognizes here and

there a feverish flush, which is wholly alien to the tradition of Hobbes, Berkeley and Locke.[8] The studied ornament of Oscar Wilde and the studied simplicity of Mr. Yeats are alike different from the writing of Mr. Bradley; but they equally reflect the ascetic Epicureanism of Walter Pater. (Mr. Yeats' recent Memoirs which have been appearing in *The Dial* form a document of very great interest for the generation of Oscar Wilde; and Mr. Yeats bears explicit testimony to the influence of Pater upon his generation.)[9]

The influence of Walter Pater has continued almost wholly, mingled with the influence of Renan, in a beautifully written but somewhat out-of-date volume of essays by a writer of our own generation, Frederick Manning, entitled *Scenes and Portraits*.[10] It is an early example of that quality of modernist realistic prose, agitated and dismembered, which culminates and disappears, I believe in the work of James Joyce. I am hazarding a contentious statement; I am not at all confident that Mr. Joyce will subscribe to this analysis of his origins; but it appears to me that *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is the work of a disciple of Water Pater as well as of Cardinal Newman.[11] In *Ulysses* this current disappears. In *Ulysses* this influence, like the influence of Ibsen and every other influence to which Mr. Joyce has submitted, is reduced to zero. It is my opinion that *Ulysses* is not so distinctly a precursor of a new epoch as it is a gigantic culmination of an old. In this book Joyce has arrived at a very singular and perhaps unique literary distinction: the distinction of having, not in a negative but very positive sense, no style at all. I mean that every sentence Mr. Joyce writes is peculiarly and absolutely his own; that his work is not a pastiche; but that nevertheless, it has none of the marks by which a "style" may be distinguished.

Mr. Joyce's work puts an end to the tradition of Walter Pater, as it puts an end to a great many other things and it emphasizes the fact that it is for the writers of this generation to evolve either under foreign influence or by the development of some earlier English tradition, to make a fresh beginning. There have been very distinguished aliens to the genealogy which I have traced; such aliens as may appear in England at almost any time. Henry James, Joseph Conrad and Charles Doughty are writers with very personal and incommunicable styles; styles which, like that of M. Proust, may be imitated but will hardly be continued.[12†] Doughty is the least known of these writers, partly for the reason that his great work *Travels in Arabia Deserta* has been rare and extremely expensive.[13] A good essay on

Mr. Doughty's prose, with quotations, is found in Mr. Middleton Murry's recent book *Countries of the Mind*.[14] Mr. Doughty's work is strangely isolated. It is a singular exception in the nineteenth century; it is almost seventeenth century prose; and its limitations are of the seventeenth century, limitations of another kind than those of the school of Walter Pater.

THE PROSE OF WYNDHAM LEWIS

It is difficult to say of any writer whose work is still in the process of formation whether he is to be an exception like Mr. Doughty, or the ancestor of an epoch, like Walter Pater. The writing of Mr. Wyndham Lewis is at present in this interesting state of ambiguity. I know of no contemporary writing to compare with that of Mr. Lewis; though I have seen some writing, especially from America, which if it had any merit at all would have Mr. Lewis's merit. The prose of Wyndham Lewis, by some odd chance of fortune, is most nearly similar to prose of an even earlier epoch than Mr. Doughty's: its nearest resemblances are not in the seventeenth century but at the end of the sixteenth century; in such work as that of Thomas Nashe, some of the translators of the time, and some of the authors of the Martin Marprelate tracts.[15] It has an abundant vigor, a living significance, a vituperation for which I find no other parallels. Mr. Lewis can use words with the fluency of a Falstaff. I have said "by chance" because I am sure that Mr. Lewis has never devoted any special study to these authors. In his early novel *Tarr* there is manifestly the strong influence of Dostoevski. But the Dostoevski part of the book, although performed with brilliancy and originality, is not representative of Mr. Lewis; the other element in the book, by no means coherent with the former, is an element of that British humor, so serious and savage, to which Baudelaire once devoted a short study.[16] Lewis is in strong sympathy with Hogarth, Rowlandson and Cruikshank; as he is primarily a painter, his imagination is primarily visual. He has some of that humor which appears in Dickens (also a visual writer), when Dickens is humorous and not consciously droll. But a catalogue of resemblances will by no means provide a formula for Mr. Lewis's style, which, still imperfect and unfinished, is seen at its best in his essay upon contemporary art and architecture entitled *The Caliph's Design*.[17]

MAY SINCLAIR AND D. H. LAWRENCE

If one examines the best of contemporary English fiction, one finds a tendency towards a style very different from that of Mr. Lewis, a style almost

exaggerated in its bareness and simplicity. This is especially apparent among writers who have devoted real care to their vocabulary and their syntax. A most interesting specimen is Miss May Sinclair's *Life and Death of Harriet Frean*.[18] Miss Sinclair has made great use, indeed all the use that is possible, of the results of psychoanalysis. In this book she reduces the novel to its barest essentials, she insists that not one superfluous description, not one superfluous conversation or monologue, shall avert the reader's attention from the outline of the heroine's mental growth and decay. Another writer who has increasingly aimed at stripping his style of superfluous decoration is Mr. Stephen Hudson in his second book *Eleanor Colhouse*.[19†] Yet, while this method, either with the aim of psychological document or with the aim of bare chronicle is visible in other writers, I cannot feel sure that it represents a direction, or that either of the writers named will not find themselves departing from it. And when I remind myself of certain writers of interest, such as Virginia Woolf and D. H. Lawrence, whom I find it impossible to classify, I am tempted to withdraw any generalization. In the work of D. H. Lawrence, especially in his last book *Aaron's Rod*, is found the profoundest research into human nature, as well as the most erratic and uneven writing, by any writer of our generation.[20]

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. This essay, the first of three that TSE published in *Vanity Fair*, is the revised English version of his second "Lettre d'Angleterre" for the *Nouvelle Revue française* (424). The original English manuscript was composed circa Sept 1922 and appeared in French translation three months later. On 1 Aug 1922, *Vanity Fair* editor Edmund Wilson asked TSE to contribute an essay to the popular American magazine. When he had not yet received TSE's promised contribution, Wilson wrote again on 26 Feb 1923: "I have just seen your thing on English prose in the *Nouvelle Revue Française* and I wish you could let us reprint it in *Vanity Fair* . . . I think it is so admirable that it would be a great pity for it not to appear in English" (*L1* 723). TSE obtained permission from the *NRF* and revised the English text for *Vanity Fair* before 23 Apr 1923 (*L2* 126). Substantial differences between the English and French versions are indicated in notes below. Because TSE's original English manuscripts have not been found, all translations in the notes are editorially supplied. The subtitle and section titles were supplied by the editors at *Vanity Fair*.

2†. In *NRF*: "C'est le style de Carlyle qui constitua la grande nouveauté." [It is Carlyle's style which constituted the great novelty.]

3†. This sentence was added in *Vanity Fair*.

4†. In *NRF*: "Disons pour simplifier que même dans les cas où Carlyle n'est pas directement à l'origine de cette rupture d'équilibre de la prose anglaise, il sert encore de point de repère à

l'aide duquel la mesurer." [Let us say for the purposes of simplification that even in the cases where Carlyle is not directly at the origin of the rupture in the equilibrium of English prose, he still serves as a point of reference to aid in its assessment.]

5†. In *NRF*: "exagération, une limitation spéciale due à la prédominance de l'élément émotif" [exaggeration, a special limitation due to the predominance of the emotional element].

6†. In *NRF*: "L'influence de Walter Pater a eu pour résultat une limitation de la prose très différente de celle que l'on rencontre au XVII[e] siècle." [The influence of Water Pater had resulted in a limitation for prose that was very different from the one encountered in the seventeenth century.]

7†. In *NRF*: "Les thèmes de Walter Pater dénotent une sphère d'intérêts beaucoup plus étendue mais en dépit de cette extension, sa prose trouve ses limites dans les bornes mêmes que lui assigne une valeur toute émotionnelle." [The themes of Walter Pater indicate a much more extensive sphere of interests, but despite this breadth, his prose finds its limits in the very boundaries that a completely emotional value ascribes to it.]

8. *Principles of Logic* (1883) and *Appearance and Reality* (1893) both feature prominently in TSE's dissertation on Bradley (1.238). Quoting from *Principles of Logic* in 1917, he called Bradley "an author whom I should not hesitate to classify with Ruskin and Newman as a master of the English language" (1.540).

9. Yeats recounts his meetings with Wilde, William Morris, and the members of Rhymers' Club in "Four Years: 1887-1891," which appeared in the *Dial* from June to Aug 1921. In "More Memories" (*Dial*, May-Oct 1922), he writes that his generation "looked consciously to Pater for our philosophy," and he wonders if Pater's work "had not caused the disaster of my friends. It taught us to walk upon a rope tightly stretched through serene air, and we were left to keep our feet upon a swaying rope in a storm" (148). Both sets of memoirs were republished in *The Trembling of the Veil* (1922).

10. In the preface to the essays collected in *Scenes and Portraits* (1909), Australian-born writer Frederic Manning (1882-1935) writes that his principal model was Ernest Renan and his use of reason and irony to investigate questions of religion and faith. TSE met Manning, whose essay on poetic prose appeared after his own in the *Chapbook* (Apr 1921), through Richard Aldington, to whom he admitted on 6 July 1921: "I am not as much impressed by Manning's *Scenes and Portraits* as I expected to be – it seems to me rather derivative as literature. But I think he is undoubtedly one of the very best prose writers we have" (*L1* 569).

11. TSE similarly characterized Joyce's work to Virginia Woolf over the weekend of 23-24 Sept 1922, when he was working on this essay for the *NRF*: "There was a good deal of talk about Ulysses. Tom said 'He is a purely literary writer. He is founded upon Walter Pater with a dash of Newman.' . . . The book would be a landmark, because it destroyed the whole of the 19th Century" (*Diary* 2.202-03).

12†. In *NRF*: "des styles que l'on peut imiter, comme on peut imiter celui de M. Proust, mais dont il est peu probable qu'ils servent de point de départ à une tradition" [styles one could imitate, like one could imitate that of Proust, but which are unlikely to serve as starting points for a tradition].

13. Though TSE had reviewed his verse epic, *The Titans*, in 1916, Charles Montagu Doughty was best known for the two-volume narrative *Travels in Arabia Deserta* (1888), which was only available in a 1908 abridged version (*Wanderings in Arabia Deserta*, ed. Edward Garnett) until it was republished in Oct 1921.

14. In his "Arabia Deserta," in *Countries of the Mind: Essays in Literary Criticism* (London: W. Collins Sons, May 1922), Murry suggests that "very little prose of this assured magnificence has been written in our day . . . *Arabia Deserta* is incomparable" (145). TSE had received a copy of *Countries of the Mind* from *NRF* editor Jacques Rivière, who enclosed it with his letter of 25 Apr 1922 for potential mention in TSE's next "Lettre d'Angleterre." TSE renewed his friendship with Murry in Sept 1922 and wrote shortly thereafter to solicit a contribution from him for the *Criterion*; Murry's "Romanticism and the Tradition" did not appear there until Apr 1924.

15. For TSE's earlier remarks on the Elizabethan prose of the anonymous anti-Episcopal "Marprelate Tracts" and that of pamphleteer and satirist Thomas Nashe, see "The New Elizabethans and the Old" (13).

16. In his 1918 review of *Tarr* for the *Egoist*, TSE clarified the distinction between those elements of Lewis's style that were indebted to Dostoevsky and those that were not: "The direct contact with the senses, perception of the world of immediate experience with its own scale of values, is like Dostoevsky," he wrote, but Lewis's "purely intellectual curiosity" and English humor were thoroughly unlike the Russian novelist (1.746). For his remarks on Baudelaire's description of the characteristic ferocity of English humor in *De l'essence du rire*, see "London Letter: May, 1921" (343).

17. Lewis regarded *The Caliph's Design: Architects! Where Is Your Vortex?* (1919) as a continuation of the critique of contemporary art and literature he began in *Blast* (1914-15).

18. Shortly before this essay appeared in *Vanity Fair,* TSE had written to Sinclair on 29 May 1923, offering to double the standard contributor rates for a second story from her for the *Criterion* (*L2* 158). Her "Jones's Karma" appeared in the *Criterion* of Oct 1923.

19†. In *NRF*, there followed this sentence, subsequently deleted: "Il y a des moments où le récit de M. Hudson va jusqu'à vous faire oublier que le livre soit 'écrit,' dans n'importe quel sens du mot : il semble que l'on repasse simplement en esprit la morne chronique d'existences humaines." [There are moments where Hudson's account goes to the point of making you forget that the book is "written," in any sense of the word: it seems that one simply relives in spirit the doleful chronicle of human existence.]

Stephen Hudson was the pen name of Sydney Schiff (1868-1944), patron of the arts and TSE's friend and frequent correspondent. He adopted the name shortly before the publication of his autobiographical novel, *Richard Kurt* (1919), which TSE admired but which he told Schiff was "more crowded with events and people than was essential" (*L1* 380). Schiff composed the second novel in the sequence, *Elinor Colhouse* (Nov 1921), as a prologue to *Richard Kurt*; his story "The Thief" appeared pseudonymously in the second issue of the *Criterion* (Jan 1923). On 25 Apr 1922, *NRF* editor Jacques Rivière had asked TSE if he might find occasion to mention Schiff's new novel in his next "Lettre d'Angleterre," the French version of the present essay.

20. TSE had praised Lawrence's "terrifying disinterestedness" in *Aaron's Rod* in "London Letter: August, 1922" (413).

Andrew Marvell[1]

A review of *Miscellaneous Poems*, by Andrew Marvell

London: Nonesuch Press, 1923. Pp. 148.

The Nation and the Athenaeum, 33 (29 Sept 1923) 809.

The Nonesuch Press, having produced an admirable edition of poems by John Donne, has now brought out a still more beautiful and wholly satisfactory edition of Marvell.[2] It is to be hoped that these will be followed by similar editions of other poets of the same epoch; for if seventeenth-century poetry is to be in fashion – and we suspect that the Nonesuch Press is a barometer of the tastes of at least 850 people – let it be a thoroughgoing fashion.[3] Fashions can be turned to account, and in this fashion there is a great deal that is wholly commendable; but if it is to be fruitful, and not merely an expression of petulance against the nineteenth century, it must establish itself by a discriminating study of a considerable number of poets, an appreciation of what they have in common, and of what each has that he shares with none other.

A year or two ago, after the City of Hull, with more gratitude than most cities, had commemorated the tercentenary of a Parliamentarian who had served his constituency well, there appeared a memorial volume which did more credit to the City which subventioned it than to the writers whose critical essays on Andrew Marvell were there assembled.[4] From such a collection some genuine agreement, or definite difference, concerning the place and significance in English literature of the author celebrated, ought to transpire: but it never does. Critics almost invariably treat a writer, on such solemn occasions, as if it were impiety to recognize that any other authors have existed, or have had any relation to the subject of the eulogy. Exactly the points which it is their business to ponder, and on which their consensus or discord would have some interest and value, are avoided; the critics neither agree nor disagree: they expatiate upon their own whimsies and fancies. Now, a poet must be very great, very individual indeed, for us to be more or less safe in isolating him in this way; and even then we have only the part of a true appreciation. And Marvell and his contemporaries are not in this class. There is no one of them who is a safe model for study,

in the sense that Chaucer, that Pope, is a safe model. For they are all more or less fantastical. This is no censure; there is no reason why a poet should not be as fantastical as possible, if that is the only way for him. But fantasticality must be that proper to its age, and the fantastic which may be a proper expression for our own will not be the fantastic of any other. Our conceits cannot be those of Marvell; they will spring, equally genuine, from a different impulse, from a different level of feeling.

Marvell is, without doubt, a very conceited poet. In a conceit two things very different are brought together, and the spark of ecstasy generated in us is a perception of power in bringing them together. It is, in my opinion, a conceit of the very finest order when Marvell says, of a spring of clear water:

> Might a soul bathe there and be clean?
> Or slake its drought?[5]

Our pleasure is in the suddenness of the transference from material to spiritual water. But when Shakespeare says –

> She looks like sleep
> As she would catch another Antony
> In her strong toil of grace,[6]

it is not a conceit. For instead of contrast we have fusion: a restoration of language to contact with things. Such words have the inevitability which make them appropriate to be spoken by any character. And when a greater than Marvell – Bishop King – says –

> But hark! my pulse, like a soft drum,
> Beats my approach, tells thee I come,[7]

that also is a conceit. If the drum were left out it would cease to be a conceit – but it would lose the valuable associations which the drum gives it. But when Dante says –

> Qual si fe Glauco, al gustar della erba,[8]

or –

> l'impresa
> Che fe Nettuno ammirar l'ombra d'Argo, –[9]

or the best known –

si ver noi aguzzevan le ciglia,
come vecchio sartor fa nella cruna,[10]

these are not conceits. They have rational necessity as well as suggestiveness; they are, like the words of Shakespeare above, an *explication* of the meaning.

A conceit is not to be something practised by the poet and despised by the critic; it has its place; for a purpose, for a poet, for a whole age, it may be the proper thing. And we must understand that the conceits which seem to us to fail are formed by exactly the same method as the conceits which seem to us to succeed. For that understanding we must read the whole of Marvell. But we must not only read the whole of Marvell; we must read Cleveland as well. And for this reason, and for others, and for the simple pleasure in a well-made book, we hope that the Nonesuch Press will continue their editions of seventeenth-century poets.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. TSE's second essay of this title; for the first, originally published in the *TLS* in 1921, see "Andrew Marvell" (309).

2. TSE reviewed the Nonesuch Press edition of Donne's love poems in "John Donne" (440).

3. After the present edition of 850 copies, the Press went on to produce fine editions of the poetry of Abraham Cowley (1923), Bishop Henry King (1925), John Milton (1926), and George Herbert (1927), followed by its seven-volume edition of Shakespeare (1929-33).

4. Tercentenary celebrations for Marvell, who was MP for Kingston upon Hull from 1659 to 1678, were held there in Mar 1921. TSE's 1921 essay on Marvell for the *TLS* was reprinted in the volume commissioned by the city, *Andrew Marvell, 1621-1678, Tercentenary Tributes* (1922), which also featured essays by Edmund Gosse, J. C. Squire, and others.

5. "Clorinda and Damon," ll. 15-16; TSE follows the punctuation and capitalization of the Muses Library edition (1898) that he owned.

6. *Antony and Cleopatra* V.ii.344-46.

7. Henry King, "An Exequy To his Matchlesse never to be forgotten Friend," ll. 111-12.

8. *Paradiso* I. 68. *Trans*: "as was Glaucus, tasting of the grass" (*DC3* 7); *read*: "qual si fe' Glauco nel gustar dell'erba"

9. *Paradiso* XXXIII.95-96. *Trans*: "the emprise that erst threw Neptune in amaze at Argo's shadow" (*DC3* 405); *read*: "alla impresa, / che fe' Nettuno"

10. *Inferno* XV. 20-21. *Trans*: "and towards us sharpened their vision, as an aged tailor does at the eye of his needle" (*DC1* 159); *read*: "e sì ver noi aguzzavan"; lines 15-21 are marked in the margin of TSE's copy.

The Function of Criticism[1]

I

Writing several years ago on the subject of the relation of the new to the old in art, I formulated a view to which I still adhere, in sentences which I take the liberty of quoting, because the present paper is an application of the principle they express:

> The existing monuments form an ideal order among themselves, which is modified by the introduction of the new (the really new) work of art among them. The existing order is complete before the new work arrives; for order to persist after the supervention of novelty, the *whole* existing order must be, if ever so slightly, altered; and so the relations, proportions, values of each work of art toward the whole are readjusted; and this is conformity between the old and the new. Whoever has approved this idea of order, of the form of European, of English literature, will not find it preposterous that the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past.[2]

I was dealing then with the artist, and the sense of tradition which, it seemed to me, the artist should have; but it was generally a problem of order; and the function of criticism seems to be essentially a problem of order too. I thought of literature then, as I think of it now, of the literature of the world, of the literature of Europe, of the literature of a single country, not as a collection of the writings of individuals, but as "organic wholes," as systems in relation to which, and only in relation to which, individual works of literary art, and the works of individual artists, have their significance. There is accordingly something outside of the artist to which he owes allegiance, a devotion to which he must surrender and sacrifice himself in order to earn and to obtain his unique position. A common inheritance and a common cause unite artists consciously or unconsciously: it must be admitted that the union is mostly unconscious. Between the true artists of any time there is, I believe, an unconscious community. And, as our instincts of tidiness imperatively command us not to leave to the haphazard of unconsciousness what we can attempt to do consciously, we are

forced to conclude that what happens unconsciously we could bring about, and form into a purpose, if we made a conscious attempt. The second-rate artist, of course, cannot afford to surrender himself to any common action; for his chief task is the assertion of all the trifling differences which are his distinction: only the man who has so much to give that he can forget himself in his work can afford to collaborate, to exchange, to contribute.

If such views are held about art, it follows that *a fortiori* whoever holds them must hold similar views about criticism. When I say criticism, I mean of course in this place the commentation and exposition of works of art by means of written words; for of the general use of the word "criticism" to mean such writings, as Matthew Arnold uses it in his essay, I shall presently make several qualifications.[3] No exponent of criticism (in this limited sense) has, I presume, ever made the preposterous assumption that criticism is an autotelic activity.[4†] I do not deny that art may be affirmed to serve ends beyond itself; but art is not required to be aware of these ends, and indeed performs its function, whatever that may be, according to various theories of value, much better by indifference to them. Criticism, on the other hand, must always profess an end in view, which, roughly speaking, appears to be the elucidation of works of art and the correction of taste. The critic's task, therefore, appears to be quite clearly cut out for him; and it ought to be comparatively easy to decide whether he performs it satisfactorily, and in general, what kinds of criticism are useful and what are otiose. But on giving the matter a little attention, we perceive that criticism, far from being a simple and orderly field of beneficent activity, from which impostors can be readily ejected, is no better than a Sunday park of contending and contentious orators, who have not even arrived at the articulation of their differences. Here, one would suppose, was a place for quiet co-operative labour. The critic, one would suppose, if he is to justify his existence, should endeavour to discipline his personal prejudices and cranks – tares to which we are all subject – and compose his differences with as many of his fellows as possible, in the common pursuit of true judgment. When we find that quite the contrary prevails, we begin to suspect that the critic owes his livelihood to the violence and extremity of his opposition to other critics, or else to some trifling oddities of his own with which he contrives to season the opinions which men already hold, and which out of vanity or sloth they prefer to maintain. We are tempted to expel the lot.

Immediately after such an eviction, or as soon as relief has abated our rage, we are compelled to admit that there remain certain books, certain essays, certain sentences, certain men, who have been "useful" to us. And our next step is to attempt to classify these, and find out whether we establish any principles for deciding what kinds of book should be preserved, and what aims and methods of criticism should be followed.

II

The view of the relation of the work of art to art, of the work of literature to literature, of "criticism" to criticism, which I have outlined above, seemed to me natural and self-evident.[5†] I owe to Mr. Middleton Murry my perception of the contentious character of the problem; or rather, my perception that there is a definite and final choice involved. To Mr. Murry I feel an increasing debt of gratitude. Most of our critics are occupied in labour of obnubilation; in reconciling, in hushing up, in patting down, in squeezing in, in glozing over, in concocting pleasant sedatives, in pretending that the only difference between themselves and others is that they are nice men and the others of very doubtful repute. Mr. Murry is not one of these. He is aware that there are definite positions to be taken, and that now and then one must actually reject something and select something else. He is not the anonymous writer who in a literary paper several years ago asserted that Romanticism and Classicism are much the same thing, and that the true Classical Age in France was the Age which produced the Gothic cathedrals and – Jeanne d'Arc.[6] With Mr. Murry's formulation of Classicism and Romanticism I cannot agree;[7] the difference seems to me rather the difference between the complete and the fragmentary, the adult and the immature, the orderly and the chaotic. But what Mr. Murry does show is that there are at least two attitudes toward literature and toward everything, and that you cannot hold both. And the attitude which he professes appears to imply that the other has no standing in England whatever. For it is made a national, a racial issue.

Mr. Murry makes his issue perfectly clear. "Catholicism," he says, "stands for the principle of unquestioned spiritual authority outside the individual; that is also the principle of Classicism in literature."[8] Within the orbit within which Mr. Murry's discussion moves, this seems to me an unimpeachable definition, though it is of course not all that there is to be said about either Catholicism or Classicism. Those of us who find ourselves supporting what Mr. Murry calls Classicism believe that men cannot get

on without giving allegiance to something outside themselves. I am aware that "outside" and "inside" are terms which provide unlimited opportunity for quibbling, and that no psychologist would tolerate a discussion which shuffled such base coinage; but I will presume that Mr. Murry and myself can agree that for our purpose these counters are adequate, and concur in disregarding the admonitions of our psychological friends. If you find that you have to imagine it as outside, then it is outside. If, then, a man's interest is political, he must, I presume, profess an allegiance to principles, or to a form of government, or to a monarch; and if he is interested in religion, and has one, to a Church; and if he happens to be interested in literature, he must acknowledge, it seems to me, just that sort of allegiance which I endeavoured to put forth in the preceding section.[9†] There is, nevertheless, an alternative, which Mr. Murry has expressed. "The English writer, the English divine, the English statesman, inherit no rules from their forbears; they inherit only this: a sense that in the last resort they must depend upon the inner voice."[10] This statement does, I admit, appear to cover certain cases; it throws a flood of light upon Mr. Lloyd George. But why "*in the last resort*"? Do they, then, avoid the dictates of the inner voice up to the last extremity? My belief is that those who possess this inner voice are ready enough to hearken to it, and will hear no other. The inner voice, in fact, sounds remarkably like an old principle which has been formulated by an elder critic in the now familiar phrase of "doing as one likes."[11] The possessors of the inner voice ride ten in a compartment to a football match at Swansea, listening to the inner voice, which breathes the eternal message of vanity, fear, and lust.[12]

Mr. Murry will say, with some show of justice, that this is a wilful misrepresentation. He says: "If they (the English writer, divine, statesman) dig *deep enough* in their pursuit of self-knowledge – a piece of mining done not with the intellect alone, but with the whole man – they will come upon a self that is universal" – an exercise far beyond the strength of our football enthusiasts.[13] It is an exercise, however, which I believe was of enough interest to Catholicism for several handbooks to be written on its practice. But the Catholic practitioners were, I believe, with the possible exception of certain heretics,[14†] not palpitating Narcissi; the Catholic did not believe that God and himself were identical. "The man who truly interrogates himself will ultimately hear the voice of God," Mr. Murry says.[15] In theory, this leads to a form of pantheism which I maintain is not European – just as Mr. Murry maintains that "Classicism" is not English. For its practical results, one may refer to the verses of *Hudibras*.[16]

I did not realise that Mr. Murry was the spokesman for a considerable sect, until I read in the editorial columns of a dignified daily that "magnificent as the representatives of the classical genius have been in England, they are not the sole expressions of the English character, which remains at bottom obstinately 'humorous' and nonconformist."[17] This writer is moderate in using the qualification *sole*, and brutally frank in attributing this "humorousness" to "the unreclaimed Teutonic element in us." But it strikes me that Mr. Murry, and this other voice, are either too obstinate or too tolerant. The question is, the first question, *not* what comes natural or what comes *easy* to us, but what is right? Either one attitude is better than the other, or else it is indifferent. But how can such a choice be indifferent? Surely the reference to racial origins, or the mere statement that the French are thus, and the English otherwise, is not expected to settle the question: which, of two antithetical views, is *right*? And I cannot understand why the opposition between Classicism and Romanticism should be profound enough in Latin countries (Mr. Murry says it is) and yet of no significance among ourselves. For if the French are *naturally* classical, why should there be any "opposition" in France, any more than there is here? And if Classicism is not natural to them, but something acquired, why not acquire it here? Were the French in the year 1600 classical, and the English in the same year romantic? A more important difference, to my mind, is that the French in the year 1600 *had already a more mature prose*.

III

This discussion may seem to have led us a long way from the subject of this paper. But it was worth my while to follow Mr. Murry's comparison of Outside Authority with the Inner Voice. For to those who obey the inner voice (perhaps "obey" is not the word) nothing that I can say about criticism will have the slightest value. For they will not be interested in the attempt to find any common principles for the pursuit of criticism. Why have principles, when one has the inner voice? If I like a thing, that is all I want; and if enough of us, shouting all together, like it, that should be all that *you* (who don't like it) ought to want. The law of art, said Mr. Clutton Brock, is all case law.[18†] And we can not only like whatever we like to like but we can like it for any reason we choose. We are not, in fact, concerned with literary *perfection* at all – the search for perfection is a sign of pettiness, for it shows that the writer has admitted the existence of an unquestioned spiritual authority outside himself, to which he has attempted to *conform*.

We are not in fact interested in art. We will not worship Baal. "The principle of classical leadership is that obeisance is made to the office or to the tradition, never to the man."[19] And we want, not principles, but men.

Thus speaks the Inner Voice. It is a voice to which, for convenience, we may give a name: and the name I suggest is Whiggery.

IV

Leaving, then, those whose calling and election are sure, and returning to those who shamefully depend upon tradition and the accumulated wisdom of time, and restricting the discussion to those who sympathise with each other in this frailty, we may comment for a moment upon the use of the terms "critical" and "creative" by one whose place, on the whole, is with the weaker brethren. Matthew Arnold distinguishes far too bluntly, it seems to me, between the two activities: he overlooks the capital importance of criticism in the work of creation itself.[20] Probably, indeed, the larger part of the labour of an author in composing his work is critical labour; the labour of sifting, combining, constructing, expunging, correcting, testing: this frightful toil is as much critical as creative. I maintain even that the criticism employed by a trained and skilled writer on his own work is the most vital, the highest kind of criticism; and (as I think I have said before) that some creative writers are superior to others solely because their critical faculty is superior. There is a tendency, and I think it is a whiggery tendency, to decry this critical toil of the artist; to propound the thesis that the great artist is an unconscious artist, unconsciously inscribing on his banner the words Muddle Through. Those of us who are Inner Deaf Mutes are, however, sometimes compensated by a humble conscience, which, though without oracular expertness, counsels us to do the best we can, reminds us that our compositions ought to be as free from defects as possible (to atone for their lack of inspiration), and, in short, makes us waste a good deal of time. We are aware, too, that the critical discrimination which comes so hardly to us has in more fortunate men flashed in the very heat of creation; and we do not assume that because works have been composed without apparent critical labour, no critical labour has been done. We do not know what previous labours have prepared, or what goes on, in the way of criticism, all the time in the minds of the creators.

But this affirmation recoils upon us. If so large a part of creation is really criticism, is not a large part of what is called "critical writing" really creative? If so, is there not creative criticism in the ordinary sense? The answer

seems to be, that there is no equation. I have assumed as axiomatic that a creation, a work of art, is autotelic;[21†] and that criticism, by definition, is *about* something other than itself. Hence you cannot fuse creation with criticism as you can fuse criticism with creation. The critical activity finds its highest, its true fulfilment in a kind of union with creation in the labour of the artist.

But no writer is completely self-sufficient, and many creative writers have a critical activity which is not all discharged into their work. Some seem to require to keep their critical powers in condition for the real work by exercising them miscellaneously; others, on completing a work, need to continue the critical activity by commenting on it. There is no general rule.[22†] And as men can learn from each other, so some of these treatises have been useful to other writers. And some of them have been useful to those who were not writers.

At one time I was inclined to take the extreme position that the *only* critics worth reading were the critics who practised, and practised well, the art of which they wrote.[23] But I had to stretch this frame to make some important inclusions; and I have since been in search of a formula which should cover everything I wished to include, even if it included more than I wanted. And the most important qualification which I have been able to find, which accounts for the peculiar importance of the criticism of practitioners, is that a critic must have a very highly developed sense of fact. This is by no means a trifling or frequent gift. And it is not one which easily wins popular commendations.[24†] The sense of fact is something very slow to develop, and its complete development means perhaps the very pinnacle of civilisation.[25†] For there are so many spheres of fact to be mastered, and our outermost sphere of fact, of knowledge, of control, will be ringed with narcotic fancies in the sphere beyond. To the member of the Browning Study Circle, the discussion of poets about poetry may seem arid, technical, and limited. It is merely that the practitioners have clarified and reduced to a state of fact all the feelings that the member can only enjoy in the most nebulous form; the dry technique implies, for those who have mastered it, all that the member thrills to; only that has been made into something precise, tractable, under control. That, at all events, is one reason for the value of the practitioner's criticism – he is dealing with his facts, and he can help us to do the same.

And at every level of criticism I find the same necessity regnant. There is a large part of critical writing which consists in "interpreting" an author, a

work. This is not on the level of the Study Circle either; it occasionally happens that one person obtains an understanding of another, or a creative writer, which he can partially communicate, and which we feel to be true and illuminating. It is difficult to confirm the "interpretation" by external evidence. To anyone who is skilled in fact on this level there will be evidence enough. But who is to prove his own skill? And for every success in this type of writing there are thousands of impostures. Instead of insight, you get a fiction. Your test is to apply it again and again to the original, with your view of the original to guide you. But there is no one to guarantee your competence, and once again we find ourselves in a dilemma.

We must ourselves decide what is useful to us and what is not; and it is quite likely that we are not competent to decide. But it is fairly certain that "interpretation" (I am not touching upon the acrostic element in literature) is only legitimate when it is not interpretation at all, but merely putting the reader in possession of facts which he would otherwise have missed. I have had some experience of Extension lecturing, and I have found only two ways of leading any pupils to like anything with the right liking: to present them with a selection of the simpler kind of facts about a work – its conditions, its setting, its genesis – or else to spring the work on them in such a way that they were not prepared to be prejudiced against it. There were many facts to help them with Elizabethan drama: the poems of T. E. Hulme only needed to be read aloud to have immediate effect.[26]

Comparison and analysis, I have said before, and Remy de Gourmont has said before me (a real master of fact – sometimes, I am afraid, when he moved outside of literature, a master illusionist of fact), are the chief tools of the critic.[27] It is obvious indeed that they *are* tools, to be handled with care, and not employed in an inquiry into the number of times giraffes are mentioned in the English novel. They are not used with conspicuous success by many contemporary writers. You must know what to compare and what to analyse. The late Professor Ker had skill in the use of these tools.[28] Comparison and analysis need only the cadavers on the table; but interpretation is always producing parts of the body from its pockets, and fixing them in place. And any book, any essay, any note in *Notes and Queries*, which produces a fact even of the lowest order about a work of art is a better piece of work than nine-tenths of the most pretentious critical journalism, in journals or in books. We assume, of course, that we are masters and not servants of facts, and that we know that the discovery of Shakespeare's laundry bills would not be of much use to us; but we must always reserve

final judgment as to the futility of the research which has discovered them, in the possibility that some genius will appear who will know of a use to which to put them. Scholarship, even in its humblest forms, has its rights; we assume that we know how to use it, and how to neglect it. Of course the multiplication of critical books and essays may create, and I have seen it create, a vicious taste for reading about works of art instead of reading the works themselves, it may supply opinion instead of educating taste. But *fact* cannot corrupt taste; it can at worst gratify one taste – a taste for history, let us say, or antiquities, or biography – under the illusion that it is assisting another. The real corruptors are those who supply opinion or fancy; and Goethe and Coleridge are not guiltless – for what is Coleridge's *Hamlet*: is it an honest inquiry as far as the data permit, or is it an attempt to present Coleridge in an attractive costume?[29]

We have not succeeded in finding such a test as anyone can apply; we have been forced to allow ingress to innumerable dull and tedious books; but we have, I think, found a test which, for those who are able to apply it, will dispose of the really vicious ones. And with this test we may return to the preliminary statement of the polity of literature and of criticism. For the kinds of critical work which we have admitted, there is the possibility of co-operative activity, with the further possibility of arriving at something outside of ourselves, which may provisionally be called truth. But if anyone complains that I have not defined truth, or fact, or reality, I can only say apologetically that it was no part of my purpose to do so, but only to find a scheme into which, whatever they are, they will fit, if they exist.

NOTES

1. As revised and printed in *SE*; originally published in the *Criterion*, 2 (Oct 1923), 31-42. The essay was completed before 20 Sept, when TSE wrote to Lady Rothermere that the issue was "quite ready" and that he had "written a long essay for it in the attempt to give the liveliness of controversy and the noise of battle" (*L2* 221). The title is derived from Matthew Arnold's "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" (1865), to which TSE refers below.

2. From "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (106-07).

3. In "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," Arnold defines criticism as "a disinterested endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world." *Essays Literary and Critical* (London: Dent, 1914), 23.

4†. In *Criterion*: "autonomous activity"

5†. In *Criterion*: "natural and (I am afraid) self-evident"

6. TSE refers to "A French Romantic," Basil de Selincourt's anonymous review of Albert Thibaudet's *Les Idées de Charles Maurras* (1920) in *TLS* of 28 Oct 1920: "The period of classical

production in France was, we believe, a great romantic period, the period of which Joan was, as it were, a retarded flower, the period which saw the building and decorating of the great cathedrals; and the period was classical in this sense, that you had then the energy of the people concentrated in its entirety upon the expression of a spiritual interpretation of life. . . . The true France, the France of the crusades and the cathedrals, the France of Ste. Jeanne d'Arc still lives" (626). For TSE's response, see "A French Romantic" (275).

7. Murry, "On Fear; and on Romanticism," *Adelphi*, 1 (Sept 1923), 269-77. This essay initiated a public controversy between Murry and TSE on the nature of romanticism and classicism that continued through May 1927.

8. Murry, "On Fear; and on Romanticism," 276.

9†. In *Criterion*: "in the preceding capital"

10. Murry, "On Fear; and on Romanticism," 275.

11. "Doing as One Likes" is the title of Chapter 2 of Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* (1869). Writing in response to John Stuart Mill's "On Liberty" (1859), which asserted the individual's moral and economic freedom from the State, Arnold countered that extremes of personal liberty and the drift to anarchy must be checked by the "right reason" and authority of the State.

12. TSE refers to the packed rail cars transporting fans to the annual England-Wales International Rugby football match, next scheduled in Swansea, Wales, in Jan 1924.

13. Murry, "On Fear; and on Romanticism," 275.

14†. In *Criterion*: "of heretical experts who were often Teutonic,"

15. Murry, "On Fear; and on Romanticism," 275.

16. Samuel Butler's three-part mock epic poem *Hudibras*, written between 1660 and 1680, satirizes the excesses of the Puritans (Cromwellians and Presbyterians) during the English Civil War. Hudibras, the hapless colonel in Cromwell's army, possesses the views of religion and God that Butler attributes to all of them in the first canto: "Still so perverse and opposite, / As if they worshipp'd God for spite . . . / Free-will they one way disavow, / Another, nothing else allow: / All piety consists therein / In them, in other men all sin."

17. From "The Classics in France," *Times* (31 Aug 1923, 10), to which TSE responds in the succeeding essay, "The Classics in France – and in England" (469).

18†. In *Criterion:* "The law of art, says Mr. Clutton Brock (I do not pretend to quote exactly, being separated from his book) is all case law."

Arthur Clutton-Brock, *Shakespeare's Hamlet* (London: Methuen, 1922): "The law of art is all case law, and *Hamlet* is a case that has been decided in the court of experience" (85). In the book, Clutton-Brock sharply criticizes TSE's view of *Hamlet* as "an artistic failure," asserting that his arguments came partly from J. M. Robertson, "though not stated with his accuracy" (15). On 3 Sept TSE described Clutton-Brock to Pound as "the worst mind in London, which is saying a good deal" (*L2* 208).

19. Murry, "On Fear; and on Romanticism," 277.

20. Arnold asserts in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time": "The critical power is of lower rank than the creative." *Essays in Criticism*, 4.

21†. In *Criterion*: "autonomous."

22†. In *Criterion*: "commenting on it. Coleridge (if you like it) had to write about others; Dryden had to write about his own occupations. I do not suppose Mr. Joyce has to do either. There is no general rule."

23. In his 1919 lecture "Modern Tendencies in Poetry," TSE claimed: "the capacity of appreciating poetry is inseparable from the power of producing it, it is poets themselves who can best appreciate poetry" (215). He addressed the same argument at length in the 1920 essay "A Brief Treatise on the Criticism of Poetry" (202).

24†. In *Criterion*: "commendation. So important it seems to me, that I am inclined to make one distinction between Classicism and Romanticism of this, that the romantic is deficient or undeveloped in his ability to distinguish between fact and fancy, whereas the classicist, or adult mind, is thoroughly realist – without illusions, without day-dreams, without hope, without bitterness, and with an abundant resignation. But this would be really a digression."

25†. In *Criterion*: "pinnacle, or (as American newspapers say) 'peak quotation' of civilization."

26. TSE discovered the five poems that compose "The Complete Poetical Works of T. E. Hulme" in an addendum to Pound's *Ripostes* (1912) and discussed Hulme's "The Embankment" in "Reflections on *Vers Libre*" (1.513). Though Hulme's poetry is not specifically listed in TSE's 1916-18 syllabuses, I. A. Richards recalled TSE telling him that "before joining the bank" he taught Hulme's "The Embankment" in his Extension lectures; he described it to Richards as a "most successful poem to give an audience." "On TSE," in *T. S. Eliot: The Man and His Work*, ed. Allen Tate (New York: Delta-Dell, 1967), 4.

27. TSE asserted in his 1918 essay "Studies in Contemporary Criticism, I": "The work of the critic is almost wholly comprehended in the 'complementary activities' of comparison and analysis. The one activity implies the other; and together they provide the only way of asserting standards and of isolating a writer's peculiar merits" (1.760). In "Criticism in England," he wrote: "Analysis and comparison methodically, with sensitiveness, intelligence, curiosity, intensity of passion, and infinite knowledge: all these are necessary to the great crictic" (57). And in "The Local Flavour" (1919) he described the defects of Charles Whibley as a critic: "He exercises neither of the tools of the critic: comparison and analysis" (178). Gourmont uses similar terms in "La Dissociation des idées" [The Dissociation of Ideas], *La Culture des idées* [The Culture of Ideas] (1900).

28. The Scots literary scholar W. P. Ker (1855-1923) was professor of English Literature at University College, London, and the Oxford Professor of Poetry from 1920 until his sudden death in Italy in July 1923. "We have had one very fortunate stroke," TSE wrote to Lady Rothermere on 20 Sept 1923: "W. P. Ker sent an article in and a few weeks later died of heart failure in the Alps, and as his death has attracted a great deal of attention and notice, and as I think we shall be the first if not the only review to publish anything by him since his death, it ought to be a very good advertisement" (*L2* 221). Ker's "Byron: An Oxford Lecture" appeared as the lead essay in this issue of the *Criterion*.

29. In his "Table Talk" of 24 June 1827, Coleridge suggested: "Hamlet's character is the prevalence of the abstracting and generalizing habit over the practical . . . every incident sets him thinking; . . . I have a smack of Hamlet myself, if I may say so." *Specimens of the Table Talk of the Late Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, vol I (London: John Murray, 1835), 68-69. TSE made a similar claim in "Hamlet" (122).

The Classics in France – and in England[1]

The Criterion: A Quarterly Review, 2 (Oct 1923) 104-05

Latin and Greek are to be reinstated in public instruction in France; and already there are not wanting interpreters to tell us that this is no doubt excellent for the French.[2] But in England, we are told and shall be told, such a step would be a step backward, an artificial restriction and a barrier to liberal Progress. And the difference is explained. The French are "Latins"; the English are Saxons, or – not to put too fine a point upon it – Teutons. Such a theory is only one of the many absurd conclusions to which popular ethnology and popular philology may lead us, but it happens to be one of the most noxious of these absurdities. Because most of the radical grunts of the French language came north from the Mediterranean, and ours came west from Scythia, or thereabouts,[3] the French must base their culture on Latin and Greek, and we must not. But what have the French in common with Greece (except a port on the middle sea) that we have not? and is the French spirit really more akin to that of Rome than ours?

The fact is, of course, that *all* European civilisations are equally dependent upon Greece and Rome – so far as they are civilisations at all. If we were indeed beyond the sphere of influence of Greece and Rome, and could produce a civilisation independent of them, well and good; we have no prejudice against non-European civilisations. But it would be as ridiculous for us to deny our ancestry as for India and China to reject their ancient literature, con Virgil, and compose Horatian odes. And it is as ludicrous to approve Latin for the Frenchman and belittle it for the Englishman as to approve Sanskrit for the Bengali and condemn it for the Marathi.[4]

Those who diminish Latin and Greek fail to comprehend what goes to make a civilisation. Three or four great novelists do not make a literature, though *War and Peace* is a very great novel indeed.[5] If everything derived from Rome were withdrawn – everything we have from Norman-French society, from the Church, from Humanism, from every channel direct and indirect, what would be left? A few Teutonic roots and husks. England is a "Latin" country, and we ought not to have to go to France for our Latinity, any more

than we ought to be obliged to go there for our cooking. But two hundred years ago the *English* cuisine, like *English* music, was not to be despised.

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. Printed under the general title, "NOTES," and followed by a paragraph titled "The Church of Rome" by assistant editor Richard Aldington. The section "NOTES" was permanently replaced by "A Commentary" in the issue of Apr 1924.

2. TSE responds to an editorial, "The Classics in France," in the *Times* of 31 Aug 1923 announcing the decision by French educational authorities, who had removed the obligatory teaching of classical languages in 1902, that "Latin and Greek will become once more the door to the degree of bachelor of arts and to the learned professions" (9). The editors asserted that France "has always been more directly a product of the classical spirit than ourselves. . . . Her resolve, therefore, to return to compulsory classics must not necessarily be made to serve as an argument on this side of the Channel. . . . Magnificent as the representatives of the classical genius have been in England, they are not the sole expressions of the English character, which remains at bottom obstinately 'humorous' and noncomformist. Such is still the effect of the unreclaimed Teutonic element in us, which we have never been able, and perhaps never really wished, to shake off."

3. Scythia: an ancient region north of the Black Sea, encompassing parts of modern Ukraine, Russia, and Western Asia and inhabited by a number of nomadic tribes.

4. Though the Bengali language, spoken in the state of Bengal, descends more directly from the Sanskrit than the Marathi, spoken in the state of Maharashtra, both Indo-Aryan languages share attributes of the ancient language and culture.

5. Leo Tolstoy's epic historical novel was published in 1869.

The Beating of a Drum

A review of *Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama*, by Olive Mary Busby

Oxford: Oxford UP, 1923. Pp. 87.

The Sacred Dance: A Study in Comparative Folklore

by W.O.E. Oesterley

Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1923. Pp. x + 234.[1]

The Nation and the Athenaeum, 34 (6 Oct 1923) 11-12

The inquiries of Darwin appear to have made no more impression on literary criticism than that recorded by the misleading title of Ferdinand Brunetière, *L'évolution des genres*.[2] If literary critics, instead of perpetually perusing the writings of other critics, would study the content and criticize the methods of such books as *The Origin of Species* itself, and *Ancient Law*, and *Primitive Culture*, they might learn the difference between a history and a chronicle, and the difference between an interpretation and a fact.[3] They might learn also that literature cannot be understood without going to the sources: sources which are often remote, difficult, and unintelligible unless one transcends the prejudices of ordinary literary taste. Literary historians will, it is true, trace the external chronicle of some "form" – as the antecedence of mystery and morality to drama – but this chronicle, once recounted, is a preface to be forgotten, unnecessary for the "appreciation" of the finished product – appreciation for which, as a rule, ignorant sensibility is the chief qualification. That the *nature* of the finished product ("finished," of course, is relative) is essentially present in the crude forerunner, is an assertion which the prompt disposers of values do not make.

Miss Busby's book on the Fool in Elizabethan Drama is somewhat of a disappointment. She does not produce all the facts that seem to me relevant to the Fool, and she does not draw the kind of general conclusion that I should like to see drawn. It is apparently her purpose to demonstrate the superiority of Shakespeare's Fools to all others; but this conclusion is demonstrated by the Fools themselves, and needs no assistance of scholarship.

Miss Busby's facts are good facts and worth having: my objection is that she has assembled and chosen them as a chronicler rather than as an anthropologist of Folly. It is true that the Elizabethan drama is a composite affair, in which several levels of culture are represented; and until we go back to the very crudest English dramatic performances we find everywhere this mixture. The Fool, Miss Busby observes, shows very early the influence of the "comic servant": in other words, just as Seneca or Plautus is everywhere, so there is in the Fool a foreign, artificial, Scapin-fourbe element.[4] But neither this, nor the Court-fool, is, in my opinion, the direct ancestor of the Elizabethan: I can only offer a theory, and ask whether it supports better my *interpretation* of the essential Shakespearian Fool.

Shakespeare certainly employs the comic servant. But the really remarkable contributions of Shakespeare appear less in his comedies than in his tragedies. The Fool in *Lear* is probably the ripest and finest product of Shakespearian Folly; and this Fool can hardly be classified as the "comic servant." We do not need to trace the ancestry of the comic servant or Figaro himself; perhaps there is a common ancestor in the background; but the comic servant as we find him on the Elizabethan stage is an importation, not of British descent. The Fool in *Lear* is a *possessed*; a very cunning and very intuitive person; he has more than a suggestion of the shaman or medicine man. There must, if the Fool in *Lear* be called a "comic" character, be admitted to be some of the same comic element in the Witches in *Macbeth*. And I see no reason why, by the same extension, Caliban should not be included in the same category.

I am aware that my classification of Fools may appear arbitrary. And two other inclusions may appear more arbitrary still: the Porter in *Macbeth* and Antony in the scene on Pompey's galley.[5] In these instances there is no question of supernatural powers: the Porter and Antony are Fools because they provide a contrast of mood which contributes to the seriousness of the situation. And each, in his way, is master of the situation. In comedy this antithesis is attenuated, as observable in the "comic servant" everywhere, and in a very refined state in the comedies of Marivaux; it is in tragedy, or in some form which is neither comedy nor tragedy, that the Fool, distinct from every other character, is best observed. That the Fool and the comic servant are akin, is suggested by cases where the supernatural power and the servant are separated: the powers remain with Faustus and Friar Bacon, the comedy resides in their servants.[6] Here there is no complete Fool, but a part of him is a comic servant. The prototype of the true Fool, according to

my conjecture, is a character in that English version of the Perseus legend, the Mummers' Play of St. George and the Dragon. The Doctor who restores St. George to life is, I understand, usually presented as a comic character. As Mr. Cornford suggests, in *The Origin of Attic Comedy*, this Doctor may be identical with the Doctor who is called in to assist Punch after he has been thrown by his horse.[7]

The identification of Lear's Fool with the medicine man, if it have any ground at all, can be supported by scholars with much fuller resources than mine; my interest is in its possible connection with a theory which has far stronger authority: the theory of the development of tragedy and comedy out of a common form. If Mr. Cornford's theory is correct – and I believe it has the support of Mr. Gilbert Murray – the original dramatic impulse (such as St. George and the Dragon illustrates) is neither comic nor tragic.[8] The comic element, or the antecedent of the comic, is perhaps present, together with the tragic, in all savage or primitive art; but comedy and tragedy are late, and perhaps impermanent intellectual abstractions. Now my own conclusion (for which I would not hold anyone else responsible) is this: that such abstractions, after developing through several generations of civilization, require to be replaced or renewed. The essentials of drama were, as we might expect, given by Aristotle: "Poetry, music, and dancing constitute in Aristotle a group by themselves, their common element being imitation by means of rhythm – rhythm which admits of being applied to words, sounds, and the movements of the body" (Butcher, 139).[9] It is the rhythm, so utterly absent from modern drama, either verse or prose, and which interpreters of Shakespeare do their best to suppress, which makes Massine and Charlie Chaplin the great actors that they are, and which makes the juggling of Rastelli more cathartic than a performance of *A Doll's House*.[10] As for the catharsis, we must remember that Aristotle was accustomed to dramatic performances only in rhythmic form and that therefore he was not called upon to determine how far the catharsis could be effected by the moral or intellectual significance of the play *without* its verse form and proper declamation.

The drama was originally ritual; and ritual, consisting of a set of repeated movements, is essentially a dance. It is a pity that Dr. W. O. E. Oesterley, who has written an excellent study of primitive religious dances, did not pursue the dance into drama. It is also a pity that he falls into the common trap of interpretation, by formulating intelligible reasons for the primitive dancer's dancing. "We suggest, then, that the origin of the sacred dance was

the desire of early man to imitate what he conceived to be the characteristic of supernatural powers," he says [15]. It is equally possible to assert that primitive man acted in a certain way and then found a reason for it. An unoccupied person, finding a drum, may be seized with a desire to beat it; but unless he is an imbecile he will be unable to continue beating it, and thereby satisfying a need (rather than a "desire"), without finding a reason for so doing. The reason may be the long continued drought. The next generation or the next civilization will find a more plausible reason for beating a drum. Shakespeare and Racine – or rather the developments which led up to them – each found his own reason. The reasons may be divided into tragedy and comedy. We still have similar reasons, but we have lost the drum.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Olive Mary Busby (1894-1984), a British librarian, wrote *Studies in the Development of the Fool in the Elizabethan Drama*, her only book, as an MA thesis at the University of London. Biblical scholar W. O. E. Oesterley (1866-1950) was Vicar of St. Alban's, Bedford Park, and Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of London.

2. Brunetière's *L'Évolution des genres dans l'histoire de la littérature* (1890) attempted to use Darwin's theory of evolution to explain the development of literary genres throughout history.

3. Darwin, *The Origin of Species* (1849); Henry Sumner Maine, *Ancient Law: Its Connection with the Early History of Society and its Relation to Modern Ideas* (1861); Edward Burnett Tylor, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art, and Custom* (1871). TSE wrote about the difficulty of distinguishing between interpretation and fact, particularly in the social sciences, in "The Interpretation of Primitive Ritual" (1.106).

4. In Molière's comedy, *Les Fourberies de Scapin* (1671), Scapin is a "fourbe," a trickster or double-dealer. Busby does not draw upon the tragedies of Seneca (ca. 1 BC-65 AD) or the comedies of Plautus (ca. 254-184 BC) in her study, but TSE had discussed their influence on Elizabethan drama in his Extension course on Elizabethan Literature (1.754).

5. *Macbeth* II.iii.1-46; *Antony and Cleopatra*, II.vii.

6. TSE refers to Robin, the comic servant in Christopher Marlowe's *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* (1604), and to Miles, the comic servant in Robert Greene's comedy, *The Honourable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1594).

7. The Greek myth of Perseus and Andromeda influenced the medieval Christian myth of St. George, who saves a princess by slaying a dragon. In versions of the English Mummers' Play at Yuletide, St. George is accompanied by the comic characters of the Doctor, the Fool, and the Hobbyhorse. F. M. Cornford associates this Doctor with the one that appears in the traditional "Punch and Judy" puppet shows in his *The Origin of Attic Comedy* (London: Edwin Arnold, 1914), 145, 147.

8. Murray refers to Cornford's *Origin of Attic Comedy* alongside his own work and Jane Harrison's *Themis: A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion* (1912) at the beginning of his *Hamlet and Orestes: A Study in Traditional Types* (1914).

Cornford argues that Aristophanic comedy originated with primitive ritual or folk-drama; he gives Murray credit for proposing the theory with regard to Greek tragedy, referring specifically to his "Excursus on the Ritual Forms Preserved in Greek Tragedy" (1912). See also Murray's *Four Stages of Greek Religion* (1912).

9. Classical scholar Samuel Henry Butcher (1850-1910), *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1898), 138-39.

10. The Italian acrobat Enrico Rastelli (1896-1931), a member of the famous Rastelli circus family, was known as the greatest juggler of his time. He had performed at the Coliseum on 17 Sept and was currently at the Alhambra. Ibsen's realistic prose drama, *A Doll's House* (*Et dukkehjem*, 1879), was last revived in London at the Everyman in Aug-Sept 1922.

Ulysses, Order, and Myth[1]

A review of *Ulysses*, by James Joyce

Paris: Shakespeare and Co., 1922, limited edition. Pp. 752.

The Dial, 75 (Nov 1923) 480-83

Mr. Joyce's book has been out long enough for no more general expression of praise, or expostulation with its detractors, to be necessary; and it has not been out long enough for any attempt at a complete measurement of its place and significance to be possible.[2] All that one can usefully do at this time, and it is a great deal to do, for such a book, is to elucidate any aspect of the book – and the number of aspects is indefinite – which has not yet been fixed. I hold this book to be the most important expression which the present age has found; it is a book to which we are all indebted, and from which none of us can escape. These are postulates for anything that I have to say about it, and I have no wish to waste the reader's time by elaborating my eulogies; it has given me all the surprise, delight, and terror that I can require, and I will leave it at that.

Amongst all the criticisms I have seen of the book, I have seen nothing – unless we except, in its way, M. Valery Larbaud's valuable paper which is rather an Introduction than a criticism – which seemed to me to appreciate the significance of the method employed – the parallel to the *Odyssey*, and the use of appropriate styles and symbols to each division.[3] Yet one might expect this to be the first peculiarity to attract attention; but it has been treated as an amusing dodge, or scaffolding erected by the author for the purpose of disposing his realistic tale, of no interest in the completed structure. The criticism which Mr. Aldington directed upon *Ulysses* several years ago seems to me to fail by this oversight – but, as Mr. Aldington wrote before the complete work had appeared, fails more honourably than the attempts of those who had the whole book before them.[4] Mr. Aldington treated Mr. Joyce as a prophet of chaos, and wailed at the flood of Dadaism which his prescient eye saw bursting forth at the tap of the magician's rod. Of course, the influence which Mr. Joyce's book may have is from my point of view an irrelevance. A very great book may have a very bad influence indeed; and a mediocre book may be in the event most salutary. The next

generation is responsible for its own soul; a man of genius is responsible to his peers, not to a studio-full of uneducated and undisciplined coxcombs. Still, Mr. Aldington's pathetic solicitude for the half-witted seems to me to carry certain implications about the nature of the book itself to which I cannot assent; and this is the important issue. He finds the book, if I understand him, to be an invitation to chaos, and an expression of feelings which are perverse, partial, and a distortion of reality. But unless I quote Mr. Aldington's words I am likely to falsify. "I say, moreover," he says, "that when Mr. Joyce, with his marvellous gifts, uses them to disgust us with mankind, he is doing something which is false and a libel on humanity." It is somewhat similar to the opinion of the urbane Thackeray upon Swift. "As for the moral, I think it horrible, shameful, unmanly, blasphemous; and giant and great as this Dean is, I say we should hoot him." (This, of the conclusion of the Voyage to the Houyhnhnms – which seems to me one of the greatest triumphs that the human soul has ever achieved. – It is true that Thackeray later pays Swift one the finest tributes that a man has ever given or received: "So great a man he seems to me, that thinking of him is like thinking of an empire falling."[5] And Mr. Aldington, in his time, is almost equally generous.)

Whether it is possible to libel humanity (in distinction to libel in the usual sense, which is libelling an individual or a group in contrast with the rest of humanity) is a question for philosophical societies to discuss; but of course if *Ulysses* were a "libel" it would simply be a forged document, a powerless fraud which would never have extracted from Mr. Aldington a moment's attention. I do not wish to linger over this point: the interesting question is that begged by Mr. Aldington when he refers to Mr. Joyce's "great *undisciplined* talent."[6]

I think that Mr. Aldington and I are more or less agreed as to what we want in principle, and agreed to call it classicism. It is because of this agreement that I have chosen Mr. Aldington to attack on the present issue. We are agreed as to what we want, but not as to how to get it, or as to what contemporary writing exhibits a tendency in that direction. We agree, I hope, that "classicism" is not an alternative to "romanticism," as of political parties, Conservative and Liberal, Republican and Democrat, on a "turn-the-rascals-out" platform. It is a goal toward which all good literature strives, so far as it is good, according to the possibilities of its place and time. One can be "classical," in a sense, by turning away from nine-tenths of the material which lies at hand, and selecting only mummified stuff from a museum – like

some contemporary writers, about whom one could say some nasty things in this connexion, if it were worth while (Mr. Aldington is not one of them). Or one can be classical in tendency by doing the best one can with the material at hand. The confusion springs from the fact that the term is applied to literature and to the whole complex of interests and modes of behaviour and society of which literature is a part; and it has not the same bearing in both applications. It is much easier to be a classicist in literary criticism than in creative art – because in criticism you are responsible only for what you want, and in creation you are responsible for what you can do with material, which you must simply accept. And in this material I include the emotions and feelings of the writer himself, which, for that writer, are simply material which he must accept – not virtues to be enlarged or vices to be diminished. The question, then, about Mr. Joyce, is: how much living material does he deal with, and how does he deal with it: deal with, not as a legislator or exhorter, but as an artist?

It is here that Mr. Joyce's parallel use of the *Odyssey* has a great importance. It has the importance of a scientific discovery. No one else has built a novel upon such a foundation before: it has never before been necessary. I am not begging the question in calling *Ulysses* a "novel"; and if you call it an epic it will not matter. If it is not a novel, that is simply because the novel is a form which will no longer serve; it is because the novel, instead of being a form, was simply the expression of an age which had not sufficiently lost all form to feel the need of something stricter. Mr. Joyce has written one novel – the *Portrait*; Mr. Wyndham Lewis has written one novel – *Tarr*.[7] I do not suppose that either of them will ever write another "novel." The novel ended with Flaubert and with James. It is, I think, because Mr. Joyce and Mr. Lewis, being "in advance" of their time, felt a conscious or probably unconscious dissatisfaction with the form, that their novels are more formless than those of a dozen clever writers who are unaware of its obsolescence.

In using the myth, in manipulating a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity, Mr. Joyce is pursuing a method which others must pursue after him. They will not be imitators, any more than the scientist who uses the discoveries of an Einstein in pursuing his own, independent, further investigations. It is simply a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history. It is a method already adumbrated by Mr. Yeats, and of the need for which I believe Mr. Yeats to have been the

first contemporary to be conscious.[8] It is a method for which the horoscope is auspicious. Psychology (such as it is, and whether our reaction to it be comic or serious), ethnology, and *The Golden Bough* have concurred to make possible what was impossible even a few years ago.[9] Instead of narrative method, we may now use the mythical method. It is, I seriously believe, a step toward making the modern world possible for art, toward that order and form which Mr. Aldington so earnestly desires. And only those who have won their own discipline in secret and without aid, in a world which offers very little assistance to that end, can be of any use in furthering this advance.

T. S. ELIOT

Postscript (1964): In January 1964, TSE wrote the following note to "*Ulysses*, Order, and Myth" to accompany its reprinting as "Myth and Literary Criticism" in *The Modern Tradition: Backgrounds of Modern Literature*, ed. Richard Ellmann and Charles Feidelson, Jr. (New York: Oxford UP, 1965), 661:

In rereading, for the first time after many years, this expression of my critical opinion, I am unfavourably impressed by the overconfidence in my own views and the intemperance with which I expressed them. The sentence beginning "the next generation is responsible for its own soul" strikes me as both pompous and silly. And Wyndham Lewis, before he died, wrote two books, *The Revenge for Love* and *Self-Condemned*, which are not only far superior to *Tarr* but which are definitely "novels."[10] To say that the novel ended with Flaubert and James was possibly an echo of Ezra Pound and is certainly absurd.[11] To say that other writers must follow the procedure of *Ulysses* is equally absurd. But I disagree as much now as I did then with the words quoted from Mr. Aldington writing in the *English Review* in 1921.

JANUARY 1964 T. S. E.

NOTES

1. On 17 Feb 1922, TSE had received from publisher Sylvia Beach unbound sheets of *Ulysses*, which he offered to return when he wrote on 4 Apr 1922 to thank her for "the beautiful *broché* copy of *Ulysses*" (bound in blue wrappers), a copy of the limited edition cited for this review but no longer in his library (*L1* 658). His library copy, inscribed "a present from Harriet Weaver and Sylvia Beach," was an unnumbered "Press Copy" of the English edition, published by John Rodker in Paris on 22 Oct under the Egoist Press imprint from French sheets after Beach's limited edition sold out.

TSE wrote to *Dial* editor Gilbert Seldes on 20 May 1922 that he was "toiling over" the present review and hoping to finish "in a month or so. It is a big job" (*L1* 671-72). On 6 Feb 1923,

he informed Seldes that he intended to discuss "the question of the value and the significance of the method of moulding contemporary narrative upon an ancient myth, a question which I think is of interest to Yeats, Pound and myself" (*L2* 39). He did not actually finish the review until late Sept 1923 (*L2* 253-54).

2. The first edition of *Ulysses* appeared on 2 Feb 1922. Having read and commented on the book frequently since its serialization began in 1918, TSE wrote to Sydney Waterlow on 17 Apr 1922: "It hardly seems to me worthwhile for one to say anything about *Ulysses* for six months at least – until all the imbeciles who like and dislike it for insincere reasons have tired themselves" (*L1* 662).

3. Joyce had explained the Odyssean parallels of *Ulysses* to his friend Larbaud for his article "James Joyce," which appeared in French in the *NRF*, 18 (Apr 1922), 385-409. TSE translated section IV of Larbaud's article as "The *Ulysses* of James Joyce" for the first issue of the *Criterion* (Oct 1922), 94-103.

4. Aldington had read only the serialized episodes when he published "The Influence of Mr. James Joyce" in the *English Review*, 32 (Apr 1921), 333-41. He confessed to TSE in a letter of 14 Sept 1920 that "I wrote it on an impulse, with no preliminary thought, without rereading or consulting a line of Joyce. . . . Suppose I publish my article in the E. R., will you answer it?" (Houghton). After agreeing to reply from an opposite point of view, TSE discussed the article with Joyce, who "urged Eliot to follow up Larbaud's line in replying to . . . Aldington's criticism that *Ulysses* represented chaos chaotically." *Pound / Joyce: The Letters of Ezra Pound to James Joyce* (New York: New Directions, 1967), 190. On receipt of the much-delayed review, Joyce wrote to Harriet Shaw Weaver: "I like it and it comes opportunely." *Letters of James Joyce*, vol III (New York: Viking, 1966), 83. Aldington, however, promptly resigned his position as assistant editor of the *Criterion*, explaining that TSE was "difficult to work with"; that he was paralyzed by the "snobbish attitude" of the journal; and that the reward for all his work was "a piffling little 'attack' on something I said about Joyce." *Richard Aldington: An Autobiography in Letters*, 72-73.

5. Thackeray's remarks are both from his lecture on Swift in *The English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century* (London: Smith, Elder, 1856), 40, 54.

6. Aldington, "The Influence of Mr. James Joyce," 339; TSE's italics.

7. Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) and Lewis's *Tarr* (1918) were both serialized in the *Egoist*. TSE reviewed Lewis's novel twice in the *Egoist* in "Contemporanea" (1.718) and "Tarr" (1.745); he compiled excerpts from reviews of Joyce's *Portrait* in "James Joyce and His Critics: Some Classified Comments" (1.544).

8. Yeats wrote about the need to link contemporary and ancient worlds in "The Celtic Element in Literature" (1897), asserting that "literature dwindles to a mere chronicle of circumstance . . . unless it is constantly flooded with the passions and beliefs of ancient times." *Essays and Introductions* (New York: Macmillan, 1961), 185.

9. For TSE's remarks on Frazer's comparative method in *The Golden Bough*, which discerns a unified mythology across a vast compendium of fragmented tales and rituals, see the contemporaneously published "Lettre d'Angleterre" (489), which appeared in Feb 1924 in English as "A Prediction in Regard to Three English Authors" (513).

10. In "A Note on *Monstre Gai*," TSE described *Self Condemned* (1954), an autobiographical novel about Lewis's life in Toronto during World War II, as "a book of almost unbearable spiritual agony." *Hudson Review*, 7 (Winter 1955), 524. Lewis's *The Revenge for Love*, a satire on

British culture and the appeal of communist activity in Spain during the 1930s, appeared in 1957.

11. TSE may be recalling Pound's article on *Ulysses* in "Paris Letter" (*Dial*, 72 [June 1922] 623-29), in which Pound compares unfavorably the techniques of Flaubert and James to those of Joyce, stating that "Ulysses has more form than any novel of Flaubert's" (623) and concluding that Flaubert "was interested in certain questions now dead as mutton, because he lived in a certain period; fortunately he managed to bundle these matters into one or two books and keep them out of his work on contemporary subjects; I set it aside . . . as something which matters now only as archaeology" (627).

A Preface to Modern Literature:[1]

Being a Conspectus, Chiefly of English Poetry, Addressed to an Intelligent and Inquiring Foreigner

Vanity Fair, 21 (Nov 1923) 44, 118

As a preamble to the examination of English literature at the present time it is necessary, for the sake of the reader, to risk some generalizations; to expose frankly a point of view – inevitably contestable – so that the reader may judge for himself of the reliability of the chronicler, and of his peculiar limitations and prejudices.

To discuss the "present" is not a matter only of judgment and taste; it requires also a faith and a foresight which vary with the individual. For the present consists of a great deal of the past and a little of the future; it contains a majority of people who are echoing the past, and a very small number of writers who will represent this time fifty years hence, but who are, at the moment, rather a part of the future. To give a fair view of the present, as it appears to a contemporary, it is necessary to begin with the dreariest part of the subject, the vast background of death against which the solitary figures of the future are relieved. It is necessary to begin about the date of the trial of Oscar Wilde.[2]

The effect of this trial upon English literary society was fatal.[3†] Here was a small group of English people, who had succeeded, in the midst of Victorian society, in acquiring a high degree of emancipation from the worst English vices; which was neither insular, nor puritanical, nor cautious; a public scandal disposed of its social leader for ever; the broken group lost all influence upon English civilization. Wilde and his circle stood for something much more important than any of the individual members: they stood for the end of a type of culture. In general, they represented urbanity, Oxford education, the tradition of good writing, cosmopolitanism; they were in contact with the continent, and some of their most important members were Irish.[4] They had, of course, as writers, weaknesses which today are painfully apparent; and I am much deceived if *Dorian Gray* be not perfect rubbish, and if the best of Wilde be not in *Intentions*.[5]

The greatest merit of this group of people is, to my mind, not to be found in their writings, but is rather a moral quality apparent in the group as a whole: it had a curiosity, an audacity, a *recklessness* which are in violent contrast with that part of the present which I denominate as the already dead.

In a recent anthology which I should call not so bad as meaningless, is a poem by Ernest Dowson.[6†] This is not one of his best poems; Dowson, at best, moreover, was not a very intellectual poet; nevertheless, it is distinguished from the verse of our contemporaries, which surrounds it, precisely by an intellectual dignity. It is followed by a poem by our contemporary, Mr. John Drinkwater, the emptiness of which is perfected by the final couplet:

I turn to sleep, content that from my sires
I draw the blood of England's midmost shires.[7]

To turn to sleep, contented in the possession of such a humble merit, is characteristic of the school of versifiers which Mr. Drinkwater represents. Oscar Wilde and his *confrères* were not so easily satisfied. Unfortunately, several others of the most brilliant met with a variety of disastrous ends; the society disappeared.[8]

The few serious writers who survived or appeared during the next vacant years appear suddenly in great isolation. Thomas Hardy was already a survivor of a still earlier period; Henry James and Joseph Conrad are solitary figures. The most notable characteristic of the period from 1896 was an industrious, popular and rather vulgar super-journalism. This term of reproach, however, cannot be applied without qualification to any of the most conspicuous writers of the time. Wells and Bennett have each a kind of genius which has enabled them to produce a few very remarkable books, and a few remarkable passages in inferior books. Shaw, who is an Irishman and also had the benefit of an acquaintance with Wilde's circle, is journalistic only in method, intensely serious in motive; though his seriousness is not often the seriousness of a literary artist. The most dubious of them is probably Chesterton, and even he has occasional insight. Yet, in spite of individual merit, and the very great diversity between their personalities, these men have had, I think, a combined influence toward the vulgarization of literature. In writers without their merit, the absence of a high literary standard becomes intolerable.

Any form of degeneration may easily persist beyond its proper period into a later one, and even produce its most exaggerated and conspicuous flowers in that later period. This commercial vulgarization of which I speak, has progressed with great industry. Our great hope, in fact, lies in the possibility that its success may reach such a point of obvious absurdity as to provoke a reaction.

The final and happiest acceleration, I believe, was given by the extreme popularity of poetry during the War. I do not mean merely "War Poetry," though this had its particular vogue; but even poetry on the most innocent and bucolic subjects. I am aware that the clusters of poets whom I have in mind sometimes object to being classified as a single group. It is a distasteful topic, and I hope not to return to it. But writers who have positive faults in common, and who have only trifling varieties of silliness to distinguish them one from the other, must expect to be classified as a group.[9]

The first and most conspicuous among them was Rupert Brooke. In his verse there is a certain amateur gusto which combined with his personal beauty to make him an attractive figure. He seems, also, in contrast with many of his sympathisers, to have taken his own verse not too seriously. Mr. Drinkwater, quoted above, has become almost too official an entertainer to remain in the group. (He appears to me a possible nominee for the Poet Laureateship, in succession to Robert Bridges: the latter an older poet of very respectable abilities and exceptional technical knowledge.)[10]

The majority of these poets are notable for being excessively local in interest and provincial in culture. As they possess individually very little power of development, it is natural that their literary generations should succeed each other with great rapidity, and that the newer recruits should be more ineffectual than their elders. To denominate individually writers whom I cannot conceive to have the slightest interest to recommend them, would be otiose; I mention them collectively because they are conspicuous in English periodicals, and because I wish to make quite clear how exceedingly new, in consequence, is the newness of anything that really is new. At the present moment, the forces of progress are not sufficiently numerous to affect any great body of the second order, or imitative writers; only the strongest, at present, survive.

In this conspectus, it is necessary to look also at the changes which have taken place in Ireland and America. Forty or thirty years ago the Irish influence on London was potent and valuable. After the collapse of the society in which Wilde was the most prominent member, the chief survivor was

Mr. Yeats. Although he remained domiciled in London, Mr. Yeats absented himself in the spirit, and often absented himself in the flesh, to devote himself to the work of the Abbey Theater, in Dublin.[11] Minor Irishmen of letters tended to remain in Ireland: Synge was celebrated as an Irish artist using Irish material; and the literary activity of those years in Ireland had its part in inspiring the Irish Revolution of 1916.[12] But London had little to tempt Irishmen to exile. It is admittedly fantastic but emphasises my point, if I say that the trial of Oscar Wilde led to the constitution of the Irish Free State.[13]

At the same time, or rather later – indeed, within the last ten years – another centrifugal action has been dividing America from England. The solid mass of American writing in the nineteenth century was hardly more than a local function of literature in England; with plodding dignity it followed, and but for a few men of great importance – Poe, Whitman, Hawthorne – it did not contribute or originate. The absence of any new creative effort in England, the passage of the exclusive control of American letters out of the hands of a group of gentlemen in Boston closely associated with Harvard University, the decline of prestige of the university professor, the increase of non-Anglo-Saxon elements in the population: various causes combined to give rise to styles of writing which are based on anything but contemporary English models.

As substantial performance, I am not inclined to attach to our contemporaries in America as much value as they attribute to themselves. Their work is interesting – one can see why to people in America it has supreme importance – but it is interesting as a *symptom*. It has a manner of bustle, freedom, and perhaps illusory hope. Some of America's most advertised poets strike me as expressing – beneath a novelty and often ingenuity of form – commonplace and conventional minds: I may cite Mr. Masters, Mr. Sandburg, and Mr. Lindsay. There are several able novelists, of local interest; several very able critics, chiefly occupied in chastising the vices and stupidities of their own nation – a work very useful at home, and the fruits of which we may some day enjoy, but of no interest abroad.

It will appear that English literature is in a state of disintegration into at least three varieties of provincialism: and in view of the history of the Roman Empire, this process may seem to have begun very early. Certainly, this is an unstable period; but what I have called attention to is, I believe, a temporary aberration which the appearance of any new writer of the first order should serve to check.

I do not see how Irish literature will be able to survive the existence of Mr. James Joyce's *Ulysses*: a book quite as Irish in material as a book can be, but a book so significant in the history of the English language that it must take its place as part of the tradition of that language. Such a book not only realises untried possibilities in a language, but revivifies the whole of its past. "Any writer who finds the English language inadequate for what he wants to say," Mr. Joyce once remarked to me, "is only a case of the bad workman who quarrels with his tools." I shall revert to this book; for information and acute interpretation I need only refer the reader to the article by M. Larbaud, who has a taste and knowledge of modern English literature which are rare in England itself.[14] Here, I only point out that a work of the magnitude of *Ulysses* sets, to Irish writers, a standard of *English* writing. Obviously there cannot continue to be three standards for three nations speaking the same language; the better the writers, in all three countries, the more they will have in common.

In a time like the present, the writer of the second order, the writer of charming, intelligent and distinguished work, should receive attention primarily to the extent to which his work supports, and moves in the same direction as, the writers of the first order of importance. It is not a period which can afford to speak well of a great deal of indifferent work. We are very much alone. Wells, Bennett, Chesterton, Shaw, Kipling are separated from us by a chasm;[15†] we can no longer draw sustenance from them. In spite of our admiration, neither James nor Conrad is very near to us. It is not, as is often said, that English literature is merely a collection of isolated and freakish men of genius; there was a long tradition from Ben Jonson through Dryden, down to Samuel Johnson and perhaps a little later; there was another tradition from Locke.

This is an exceptional period, in its being so little the offspring of the preceding: Walter Pater, in an earlier epoch, was an heir of Arnold and Ruskin, and Wilde the heir of Pater. I have conceived these prolegomena to be useful in order that the significance of the significant figures of our time may be more immediately grasped.[16†]

T. S. ELIOT[17]

NOTES

1. This essay, the second of three that TSE published in *Vanity Fair*, is the revised English version of his first "Lettre d'Angleterre" for the *Nouvelle Revue française* (399). The original

English manuscript was composed circa 17 Feb 1922 and published in a French translation by Charles du Bos on 1 May. TSE then revised the English manuscript for *Vanity Fair* sometime after 22 June 1923, when he jotted "first *Nouvelle Revue* article" on a letter of invitation from editor Frank Crowninshield (*L2* 127). For the circumstances behind the revision and publication of the *NRF* essays in *Vanity Fair*, see "Contemporary English Prose" (452, n. 1). Substantial differences between the English and French versions are indicated in notes below. Because TSE's original English manuscripts have not been found, all translations in the notes are editorially supplied. The title was supplied by the editors at *Vanity Fair*.

2. On 25 May 1895, Oscar Wilde was convicted, after several highly publicized trials, of gross indecency for homosexual liaisons with two male prostitutes; he was sentenced to two years in the prison of Reading Gaol.

3†. In *NRF*, the first sentence of this paragraph read: "Devant un auditoire étranger on ne saurait trop souligner l'effet qu'exerça ce procès sur la situation littéraire en Angleterre" [Before a foreign audience one cannot emphasize enough the effect this trial had on the literary situation in England].

4. TSE devoted a unit of his 1917 Extension lectures to Wilde's circle, the poets of the "Nineties," among whom he included Ernest Dowson, Lionel Johnson (both of whom attended Oxford, as did Wilde), Aubrey Beardsley, Francis Thompson, and John Davidson. He also discussed the Irish writers of the contemporaneous "Celtic Movement," including Yeats, J. M. Synge, A. E., and Fiona Macleod (1.591-92).

5. Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and his prose volume *Intentions* were both published in 1891. The title was mistakenly printed as "Dorian Grey," here and in *NRF*.

6†. In *NRF*, the first two sentences of this paragraph read: "À la page 65 d'une anthologie récente qui, plus encore qu'elle n'est mauvaise, est dépourvue de toute signification (*An Anthology of Modern Verse*: Methuen & Co.), se trouve un poème d'Ernest Dowson,– un contemporain de Wilde qui a laissé quelques pièces d'une grande beauté. Ce poème n'est pas un de ses meilleurs: il est plein de clichés de l'époque qui ont leur origine dans Swinburne; Dowson n'était pas d'ailleurs un poète très intellectuel" [On page 65 of a recent anthology that, more than being bad is lacking any meaning (*An Anthology of Modern Verse*: Methuen & Co.), is a poem by Ernest Dowson, a contemporary of Wilde who left some works of great beauty. This poem is not one of his best: it is full of clichés of the time that have their origin in Swinburne. Dowson was not a very intellectual poet].

Dowson's "They Are Not Long" and "The Carthusians" both begin on page 66 of *An Anthology of Modern Verse*. For TSE's recent remarks on this anthology, see "London Letter: April, 1922" (394).

7. From Drinkwater's "The Midlands" (70).

8. The group's most prominent members died young and within five years of one another: Aubrey Beardsley, of tuberculosis in 1898; Wilde himself, of cerebral meningitis in 1900, three years after his release from prison; Ernest Dowson, of alcoholism in the same year; Lionel Johnson, of a fractured skull from a fall two years later.

9. For TSE's previous critiques of the Georgian poets, the "single group" to which he refers here, see "Verse Pleasant and Unpleasant" and "The Post-Georgians" (1.679, 2.16).

10. Bridges was Poet Laureate of the United Kingdom from 1913 until his death in 1930, when he was succeeded by John Masefield.

11. Yeats divided his time between London, where he lived at 18 Woburn Buildings in Bloomsbury, and Dublin, where he was a founder of the Irish Literary Theatre in 1899 and the Abbey Theatre in 1904.

12. On Easter Monday, 24 Apr 1916, members of the nationalist Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army seized the General Post Office and other sites in Dublin in rebellion against British rule; fighting lasted until 29 Apr, when the rebels were executed or imprisoned. Regarding the influence of his own work on Padriac Pearse and other members of the cult of Cuchulain who partook in the Easter Rising, W. B. Yeats later asked, in "The Man and the Echo," "Did that play of mine send out / Certain men the English shot?"

13. The Irish Free State, a self-governing dominion of the British Commonwealth composed of twenty-six counties in the south and west of Ireland, was formed on the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty in Dec 1921.

14. Valery Larbaud (1881-1957) was a friend of Joyce and an early admirer of *Ulysses*, which he read in manuscript. He delivered a lecture on the book in Paris on 7 Dec 1920, and it was published in the *NRF* on 1 April 1921. TSE wrote to Larbaud on 12 Mar 1922 to ask his permission to print an English version of the lecture in the upcoming *Criterion*. Larbaud's "The *Ulysses* of James Joyce," which TSE unexpectedly translated himself, appeared in the first issue in Oct 1922.

TSE was familiar with Larbaud's essay but had evidently not read it when he composed the original manuscript of the present essay. Larbaud's article did not appear in the *NRF* until 1 Apr. On 12 Mar 1922, however, TSE told Larbaud: "I mentioned the Joyce lecture because I know that it exists" (*L1* 643).

15†. In *NRF*: "Kipling (qui est devenu complètement l'équivalent anglais du pompier), Wells, Bennett, Chesterton, Shaw, sont séparés de nous par un gouffre" [Kipling (who has become completely the English equivalent of *pompier*), Wells, Bennett, Chesterton, Shaw, are separated from us by a chasm]. *Pompier*: pretentious, pompous.

16†. In *NRF*, the essay included the following additional paragraph: "Pour terminer par quelques précisions, je citerai, comme exemple des vers américains contemporains les moins intéressants, la *Modern American Poetry* (Harcourt et Brace, New York). Je ne dois pas omettre de mentionner la publication de l'*Ulysse* de M. Joyce (Shakespeare & Co, Paris) ; celle de la revue de M. Wyndham Lewis, *The Tyro*, à Londres (The Egoist Ltd) et la publication récente par la même maison d'éditions des *Poèmes* de Miss Marianne Moore" [To end with a few specifics, I will cite as an example of the least interesting of contemporary American verse, *Modern American Poetry* (Harcourt and Brace, New York). I must not fail to mention the publication of *Ulysses* by Mr. Joyce (Shakespeare & Co., Paris); as well as Mr. Wyndham Lewis's review, *The Tyro*, in London (The Egoist, Ltd.) and the recent publication by the same publisher of the *Poems* of Miss Marianne Moore"].

17. In *Vanity Fair*, the editors supplied the phrase "Author of *The Waste Land*" next to TSE's name, which appeared in the essay's heading.

Lettre d'Angleterre[1]

La Nouvelle Revue française, 21 (1 Nov 1923) 619-25

Je viens de lire avec grand intérêt dans le numéro de septembre de la *Nouvelle Revue Française*, les observations de M. Crémieux au sujet d'une *Enquête* (que je n'ai pas encore lue) *sur les maîtres de la jeune littérature*. Et je me suis souvenu de spéculations semblables (à cela près que les opinions d'un homme donné subissent toujours dans une large mesure l'influence de sa propre vie), dont j'avais songé, voici déjà plusieurs mois, à faire l'objet d'une Chronique Anglaise pour la *Nouvelle Revue Française*. Il se trouvera probablement plus de gens parmi les écrivains anglais de ma génération, c'est-à-dire âgés de 30 à 40 ans, pour protester violemment contre mon choix, que pour lui donner une approbation même peu caractérisée. J'espère seulement que ce qu'il a de personnel pourra lui valoir en intérêt quelque chose de ce qui lui manque en autorité. J'ai choisi les *maîtres de pensée*, plutôt que les *maîtres d'art*, parce que semblable choix offre moins de difficulté, et parce que la discussion intéressera sans doute plus de gens. Mais il ne faut pas oublier que tous ces *maîtres* le sont pour une grande part à cause de leur style ; et que l'un d'entre eux, au moins, est un très grand maître d'art.

On doit reconnaître, soit dit en passant, que dans une assez grande mesure l'influence la plus puissante est venue de France ; et c'est un hommage dû, que de mentionner à cette occasion quelques noms. Sur cette partie de ma génération dont je peux parler avec sympathie, je sais combien forte a été l'influence de Rémy de Gourmont ; et Gourmont est l'un des guides qui nous firent étudier Flaubert, lequel fut un maître à la fois d'art et de pensée. Et en poésie (je ne parle toujours que pour un certain groupe) Rimbaud, Corbière et Laforgue ont été pour nous des *maîtres d'art* plus qu'aucun poète anglais de leur temps. D'ailleurs, je ne trouve pas qu'il soit toujours possible, qu'il s'agisse des Anglais ou des Français, de séparer maîtrise de pensée et maîtrise d'art. Sauf quelques exceptions : je peux témoigner de l'importante influence qu'ont eue sur mon développement intellectuel *L'avenir de l'intelligence* et *Belphégor* (non que je veuille classer ensemble MM. Maurras et Benda), et de même, sans doute, à une certaine époque, *Matière et Mémoire* : livres qui à coup sûr impliquaient à

mes yeux la maîtrise de pensée, mais non pas (je dis : à mes yeux) la maîtrise d'art.

Des trois écrivains anglais dont je veux surtout parler, deux, Henry James et Sir James Frazer, commencent à pénétrer en France par la traduction ; le troisième, Francis Henry Bradley, n'a guère de chance d'être jamais connu à Paris. C'est en effet un écrivain rare, même de notre côté de l'eau ; depuis 1883 jusqu'à voici quelques mois, son livre, *Principles of Logic*, était épuisé. La réimpression de cet ouvrage, en deux volumes augmentés de nouveaux essais, l'apparition d'une édition abrégée du *Rameau d'Or* de Frazer, et la poursuite d'une édition nouvelle et moins coûteuse de l'œuvre complète de Henry James, donnent à mes notes le caractère de chronique qui peut-être paraîtrait autrement leur manquer.

Henry James est un écrivain difficile pour les lecteurs anglais, car il est américain ; et difficile aussi pour les Américains, parce qu'il est européen ; et je ne sais s'il est d'ailleurs « possible » pour d'autres lecteurs, quels qu'ils soient. Il se peut, il est vrai, qu'un lecteur d'une sensibilité exceptionnelle, qui ne serait ni anglais ni américain, ait en ce qui le concerne l'avantage du détachement. Une chose reste certaine, c'est que les livres de Henry James forment une œuvre, qu'ils constituent un tout. Il est essentiel de les lire tous, car il importe avant tout d'en saisir à la fois l'unité et la progression. Le développement graduel, et la fondamentale identité d'inspiration, y sont également importants, et leur leçon est une seule leçon.

James a subi le destin ordinaire de ceux qui, en Angleterre, ont proclamé sans faiblesse l'importance du métier. Sa technique a reçu le genre d'éloges que l'on a coutume d'accorder à quelque inutile, laid, et ingénieux morceau de bois sculpté dont la production a exigé beaucoup de temps ; et on lui reproche de tous côtés de n'avoir pas réussi à faire précisément ce qu'il n'a point tenté de faire. Le « caractère », au sens où on s'attend à le trouver dépeint dans le roman anglais, ne le préoccupe pas ; mais ses critiques ne comprennent pas que le « caractère », n'est qu'un des moyens qui permettent de saisir le réel : si James l'avait utilisé avec plus de succès, sa méthode y aurait beaucoup perdu en subtilité, et lui-même n'eût point été aussi sensible au genre particulier de données qui constituaient son domaine. Et le fait qu'étant américain, sa vision de l'Angleterre (vision qui très régulièrement se dissipe à mesure que lui-même se développe) était une vision romanesque, est de peu d'importance. Son romanesque n'entraînait aucun défaut d'observation des choses qu'il voulait observer ; ce n'était point le romanesque de ceux qui rêvent parce que la paresse ou la peur ne leur

permettent pas de regarder le réel en face ; il vient, au contraire, de l'impérieuse ténacité d'un idéal qui, sans cesse, le tourmentait. La vision d'une société idéale le possédait ; il n'imaginait pas, il *voyait* en réalité les relations entre eux des membres de cette société. Et personne, en somme, n'a jamais mieux perçu, soit avec plus de douceur, soit avec moins d'amertume, la dissemblance du possible et du réel. Si de cela les œuvres qu'il a terminées n'administrent point la preuve, on ne saurait guère manquer de la trouver dans ses derniers romans inachevés : *The Sense of The Past*, et *The Ivory Tower*.

L'exemple que nous a offert Henry James n'était pas celui d'un style à imiter, mais bien d'une intégrité si grande, d'une vision si exigeante, qu'elle le contraignait à un effort et un souci extrême d'expression exacte. James ne nous a pas apporté des «idées», mais bien un univers nouveau de pensée et de sentiment. Cet univers, certains l'ont demandé à Dostoïevsky, d'autres à James ; et j'incline à penser que l'esprit de James, à tel point moins violent, à tel point plus raisonnable et plus résigné que celui du Russe, ne lui cède point en profondeur, et qu'il est plus utile, plus applicable à notre avenir.

L'œuvre de Sir James Frazer n'a de commun avec celle de James que son influence modeste, permanente et silencieuse. À première vue, Frazer n'est que le plus éminent des adeptes d'une science particulièrement anglaise : le folklore. Je dis particulièrement anglaise, car, à l'exception de Mannhardt en Allemagne, je ne connais pas de noms étrangers à mettre en regard de toute une liste d'Anglais : Sir E. B. Tylor, Robertson Smith, Miss Harrison, Miss Weston, A. B. Cook, F. M. Cornford, le Dr. Rendel Harris, Hartland, Elliot Smith, Gilbert Murray, et d'autres encore, – pour ne rien dire d'observateurs tels que Codrington, Spencer et Gillan, Hewett, qui ont étudié les races primitives aux quatre coins de l'Empire. L'éminence de Frazer ne vient pas seulement d'une érudition supérieure, au milieu d'écrivains dont le niveau de connaissances est chose prodigieuse ; elle ne vient pas davantage, comme celle de deux écrivains qui sont plus nettement sociologues, MM. Durkheim et Lévy-Bruhl, de théories brillantes sur les mœurs. Au contraire, on constate, en poursuivant la lecture de ce stupéfiant compendium de la superstition et de la folie humaines, que Frazer s'est interdit avec une rigueur toujours plus grande toute tentative d'explication. La première édition du *Rameau d'Or*, en deux volumes, était un essai d'explication du Prêtre de Némi. Cela conduisit à des recherches parallèles ; et finit par nécessiter une seconde et plus importante édition. L'œuvre a aujourd'hui atteint douze volumes ; et comme Sir James vient de publier en un seul volume une condensation des

douze, on peut admettre qu'il considère son œuvre comme achevée. Elle n'a pas moins d'importance pour notre époque que l'œuvre complémentaire de Freud, car elle projette sa lumière sur les complexités de l'âme, d'un angle différent ; et elle est peut-être assurée de durer davantage, en ce qu'elle consiste en un énoncé de faits, qui ne dépend en aucune façon du succès ou de l'échec d'une théorie quelconque de l'auteur. Pourtant ce n'est pas seulement une collection de faits, et ce n'est point une théorie. L'absence d'hypothèses est ici scrupule conscient et délibéré, point de vue positif. Et ce n'est que cela : un point de vue, une vision, décrite en une belle prose qui place l'œuvre de Frazer au-dessus d'autres d'érudition égale et peut-être d'une ingéniosité plus grande, et qui lui confère sur l'esprit contemporain une influence inévitable et croissante. Il a étendu la conscience humaine jusqu'aux profondeurs les plus lointaines et aux ténèbres les plus sombres qui jamais encore aient été explorées dans l'abîme du temps. Et, avec les autres savants que j'ai cités, il a jeté sur l'antiquité classique une lumière nouvelle. L'effet de tout cela ne manquera point d'être profond sur la littérature de l'avenir.

Francis Herbert Bradley est une figure aussi nettement anglaise que Sir James Frazer est écossais. Sauf ses collègues de Merton College, à Oxford (et il est rare qu'il s'y trouve), presque personne ne le connaît personnellement. Il a publié quatre ouvrages : *Ethical Studies*, depuis longtemps épuisé ; *Appearance and Reality*, sa métaphysique ; un volume d'essais, *Truth and Reality*, et le livre qui vient d'être réimprimé, ses *Principles of Logic*. Je ne veux point tenter d'exposer ici sa philosophie, mais suggérer l'effet total de cette philosophie sur une sensibilité ; cet effet est d'autant plus remarquable qu'il s'agit d'une philosophie *pure* ; elle n'emprunte ni à la science ni à la littérature rien de leurs puissances respectives de persuasion. Je dirai, si l'on veut un exemple, qu'elle constitue une philosophie *plus pure* que celle de l'un ou de l'autre de ses deux contemporains les plus distingués (mais plus jeunes que lui) : Bergson et Bertrand Russell. Car Bergson utilise la science (biologie et psychologie) et cette utilisation voile parfois l'incohérence d'une multiplicité de points de vue, qui ne sont pas tous philosophiques. Sa troublante promesse d'immortalité (« . . . même la mort . . . ») ne participe-t-elle d'aucune méthode de séduction ? Mais il ne s'agit pas pour la philosophie de savoir, nous déclare Bradley quelque part avec sécheresse, si l'âme est immortelle, mais si, et en quel sens, on a le droit de déclarer, à l'heure et dans le lieu où l'on parle, qu'elle existe. On n'a jamais pu accuser Bertrand Russell d'utiliser en philosophie la science pour séduire : il se tient

au pôle opposé de celui de Bergson. Ce qui, chez lui, inquiète, c'est plutôt qu'il n'ait jamais été réellement convaincu de la possibilité même de la philosophie : il a reçu de même l'éducation mathématique, et le philosophe, en lui, impatiente le mathématicien. C'est ainsi que son histoire offre le curieux spectacle d'un très puissant esprit (nullement inférieur à celui de Bradley) en conflit avec lui-même, et, bien que Russell ait anéanti bon nombre de systèmes, qui ne détruit pas tant ceux des autres que les siens propres. Mais Bradley est entièrement et seulement philosophe ; il est aussi loin des jongleries faciles de Lord Balfour (qui, soit dit en passant, est en métaphysique un amateur distingué), ou du vide pompeux de Bosanquet, que des méthodes de Bergson et de Russell. La philosophie, semble-t-il dire, peut être futile ou utile, mais si peu que vous vous en mêliez, votre travail devra porter sur telles et telles données, qui ne sont ni de la littérature ni de la science. Tout ce qui est en notre pouvoir, c'est, une fois ces données acceptées, de pousser notre raisonnement jusqu'au bout. Si, comme il est possible, il aboutit à zéro, du moins aurons-nous la satisfaction d'avoir poussé quelque chose jusqu'au bout, et de nous être assurés que certaines questions, qui se présentent à l'esprit des hommes, ne comportent pas de réponse, ou n'ont point de sens. Une fois acceptée sa théorie de la nature du jugement (et elle est aussi plausible que n'importe quelle autre), son éloquence aride et d'une sensibilité si grande (aucun philosophe anglais n'est plus grand écrivain), vous amène à un état qui, selon votre tempérament, sera la résignation ou le désespoir, ce désespoir affolé où l'on se demande pourquoi l'on a jamais cherché quelque chose, et ce que l'on a bien pu chercher, puisque la philosophie semble donner tout ce que l'on demande et en même temps lui enlever toute valeur.

L'avenir justifiera-t-il mon affirmation, qui dans une grande mesure est une prédiction, de l'importance que confère à ces trois hommes leur influence à venir sur une ou deux générations littéraires, ou plus encore ? C'est là évidemment une question qui peut attendre. Celle que l'on pourrait bien me poser est de savoir s'ils ont assez de points communs, si leur influence, pour tant est qu'elle existe, est assez semblable pour me donner raison de parler d'eux ensemble. Je ne me suis pas préoccupé de leurs « idées », mais bien de leur influence sur la sensibilité à travers l'intelligence ; et il est moins aisé de dire en quoi cette sensibilité consiste, que ce qu'elle n'est point. Ce n'est ni celle de Bernard Shaw, ni celle d'Anatole France, ni celle de Thomas Hardy : elle est infiniment plus désillusionnée qu'aucune de celles-ci, que j'ai choisies pour le peu qu'elles ont en commun ; peut-être est-elle plus

sèche, plus ordonnée ; mais la pulsation de son rythme vibre de toute la souffrance de la vie de l'esprit.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. This was the last of TSE's three contributions to the *NRF* under this title. It was composed in English before 4 Oct 1923 and was translated into French by Germain d'Hangest (b. 1883). For the English version, which TSE revised and published in *Vanity Fair* in Feb 1924, see "A Prediction in Regard to Three English Authors" (513). Significant differences between the French and English versions are recorded in the notes to the English text.

Marianne Moore

A review of *Poems*, by Marianne Moore

London: The Egoist Press, 1921. Pp. 24.

Marriage, by Marianne Moore

in *Manikin, Number Three*

New York: Monroe Wheeler [1923]. Pp. [20].

The Dial, 75 (Dec 1923) [594]-97

Two years ago Miss Moore's book of *Poems* – so far as I know her only book – was published in London by The Egoist Press; and I then undertook to review it for *The Dial*.[1] This promise, for one reason after another, I never fulfilled. Now another poem has appeared, *Marriage*, published by Manikin, printed apparently in Germany, and with a parenthetical introduction by Mr. Glenway Wescott.[2] Meanwhile I have read Miss Moore's poems a good many times, and always with exactly the same pleasure, and satisfaction in something quite definite and solid. Because of a promise which, because of the long delay, may be considered as having been broken, and because I can only, at the moment, think of five contemporary poets – English, Irish, American, French, and German – whose work excites me as much as, or more than, Miss Moore's, I find myself compelled to say something about them. Not that there is much that is usefully said about any new work of art – I do not rate criticism so highly; but one ought, in honesty, to publish one's beliefs.

Mr. Wescott has, in fact, written a good introduction; I only think that his distinction between proletariat art and aristocratic art is an artificial and unimportant distinction with dangerous consequences.[3] So far as a proletariat art is art at all, it is the same thing in essence as aristocratic art; but in general, and at the present time, the middle-class art (which is what I believe Mr. Wescott to have in mind when he speaks of proletariat art; the proletariat *is* middle class in America) is much more artificial than anything else; it plays with sham ideas, sham emotions, and even sham sensations. On the other hand a real aristocracy is essentially of the same blood as the people over whom it rules: a real aristocracy is not a Baltenland aristocracy of foreign race.[4] This apparently purely political definition applies

to art as well: fine art is the *refinement* not the antithesis of popular art. Miss Moore's poetry may not seem to confirm this statement. I agree with Mr. Wescott that it is "aristocratic," in that it can only please a very small number of people. But it is not, or not wholly, aristocratic in the Baltenland sense. I see in it at least three elements: a quite new rhythm, which I think is the most valuable thing; a peculiar and brilliant and rather satirical use of what is not, as material, an "aristocratic" language at all, but simply the curious jargon produced in America by universal university education – that jargon which makes it impossible for Americans to talk for half an hour without using the terms of psychoanalysis, and which has introduced "moron" as more forcible than "idiot"; and finally an almost primitive simplicity of phrase. There may be more. Up to the present time Miss Moore has concerned herself with practising and perfecting a given formation of elements; it will depend, I think, on her ability to *shatter* this formation and painfully reconstruct, whether Miss Moore makes another invention equal in merit to the first.

Rhythm, of course, is a highly personal matter; it is not a verse-form. It is always the real pattern in the carpet,[5] the scheme of organization of thought, feeling, and vocabulary, the way in which everything comes together. It is very uncommon. What is certain is that Miss Moore's poems always read very well aloud. That quality is something which no system of scansion can define. It is not separable from the use of words, in Miss Moore's case the conscious and complete appreciation of every word, and in relation to every other word, as it goes by. I think that "Those Various Scalpels" is an excellent example for study. Here the rhythm depends partly upon the transformation-changes from one image to another, so that the second image is superposed before the first has quite faded, and upon the dexterity of change of vocabulary from one image to another. "Snow sown by tearing winds on the cordage of disabled ships:"[6] has that Latin, epigrammatic succinctness, laconic austerity, which leaps out unexpectedly (altogether in "Talisman").

> your raised hand,
> an ambiguous signature:

is a distinct shift of manner; it is not an image, but the indication of a fulness of meaning which is unnecessary to pursue.

> blood on the stone floors of French châteaux, with
> regard to which guides are so affirmative:

is a satirical (consciously or unconsciously it does not matter) refinement of that pleasantry (not flippancy, which is something with a more definite purpose) of speech which characterizes the American language, that pleasantry, uneasy, solemn, or self-conscious, which inspires both the jargon of the laboratory and the slang of the comic strip. Miss Moore works this uneasy language of stereotypes – as of a whole people playing uncomfortably at clenches and clevelandisms[7] – with impeccable skill into her pattern. She uses words like "fractional," "vertical," "infinitesimal," "astringently"; phrases like "excessive popularity," "a liability rather than an asset," "mask of profundity," "vestibule of experience," "diminished vitality," "arrested prosperity." If this were all, Miss Moore would be no different from her imitators. The merit consists in the combination, in the other point of view which Miss Moore possesses at the same time. What her imitators cannot get are the swift dissolving images, like the mussel shell

> opening and shutting itself like
> an
> injured fan[8]

and phrases like

> the sea when it proffers flattery in exchange for hemp,
> rye, flax, horses, platinum, timber and fur.[9]
>
> Truth is no Apollo
> Belvedere, no formal thing. The wave may go over it if it likes.[10]

or a magnificence of phrase like

> I recall their magnificence, now not more magnificent
> than it is dim[11]

(how like Valéry's "entre les pins palpite, entre les tombes" or like his "éternellement, Éternellement le bout mordre").[12]

And also they cannot imitate her animals and birds –

> the parrakeet –
> . . . destroying
> bark and portions of the food it could not eat.[13]

Mr. Wescott, if he agrees with all or even with a part of what I have written, will probably consider it as an affirmation of his belief in a kind of

"aristocratic" art drawing no sustenance from the soil. "An aristocratic art, emulating the condition of ritual." But of course *all* art emulates the condition of ritual. That is what it comes from and to that it must always return for nourishment. And nothing belongs more properly to the people than ritual – or indeed than aristocracy itself, a popular invention to serve popular needs. (I suppose the Ku Klux Klan is a popular ritual – as popular as a ritual can be in a country where there are only variations *within* the middle class.)[14] Miss Moore's relation to the soil is not a simple one, or rather it is to various soils – to that of Latium and to that of Attica I believe (or at least to that of the Aegean littoral) as well as most positively to the soil (well top-dressed) of America. There are several reasons (buried in this essay) why Miss Moore's poetry is almost completely neglected in England, beside the simple reason that it is too good, "in this age of hard striving," to be appreciated anywhere.

And there is one final, and "magnificent" compliment: Miss Moore's poetry is as "feminine" as Christina Rossetti's, one never forgets that it is written by a woman; but with both one never thinks of this particularity as anything but a positive virtue.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. The American poet Marianne Moore (1887-1972) began publishing individual poems in 1915 before the appearance of *Poems*, her first volume. In response to Moore's reviews of both *Prufrock* and *SW* (*Contemporary Reviews* 15, 60-61), TSE wrote on 3 Apr 1921 to thank her: "I have long delayed writing to you, in fact since the 1917 *Others*, to tell you how much I admire your verse. It interests me, I think, more than that of anyone now writing in America" (*L1* 547). Though he solicited reviews on her behalf, he had postponed writing his own (which he had promised to the *Dial* for Feb 1922) while he was revising *The Waste Land* (*L1* 592). The present review was finished by 4 Oct 1923, when he wrote to Moore again: "I hope you will like it. But it does you less than justice. When you are ready to publish another book here let me know – I think I could 'float' it better than the last which never got a fair show" (*L2* 233).

2. The first issue of *Manikin* was published in Germany by the American printer-typographer Monroe Wheeler (1899-1988), but succeeding issues of the periodical, each devoted to one work by a single author, were published in New York. In each copy of *Marriage* was inserted a two-leaf review of Moore's *Poems*, titled "Miss Moore's Observations," by Wheeler's friend Glenway Wescott (1901-87), a young admirer who discovered Moore's poems while working for *Poetry* (Chicago) and met her in autumn 1921.

3. Wescott begins his introduction: "The existence of a schism in the body of art is coming to be recognized dimly by contemporary criticism. Upon one side a proletariat art develops its obvious honesty and simple destiny, realistic farce and instructive tragedy; upon the other an aristocratic art, emulating the condition of ritual, withdraws down an avenue of preparation

and deliberate discipline. A fine example of this latter devotion is the work of Marianne Moore."

4. TSE refers to the "German Balts," who had enjoyed an elite, landowning aristocracy before the war in Latvia, a Baltic province of Russia. When Latvia (along with Estonia and Lithuania) broke away from Russia to become an independent state in 1917, and when Germany, which had aimed to annex the Baltic provinces, lost the war in Nov 1918, the agrarian, economic, and political status of the minority German Balts rapidly diminished. TSE followed and occasionally reported on the currency movements of these countries in his monthly "Foreign Exchanges" column for the *Lloyds Bank Monthly*, 1923-25.

5. TSE made a similar allusion to Henry James's short story "The Figure in the Carpet" (1896) in "A Brief Treatise on the Criticism of Poetry," wherein he referred to "the pattern of Sainte-Beuve's carpet" (203).

6. This line (with a line break after "disabled") and the two following quoted lines are from "Those Various Scalpels," in *Poems* (7). All subsequent quotations from Moore's poems are from *Poems*.

7. "playing . . . at clenches and clevelandisms": an echo of Dryden's "Of Dramatick Poesy" (1668), in which Lisideius asks if one of the inferior, unnamed poets about whom Crites speaks "does not perpetually pay us with clenches upon words and a certain clownish kind of raillery? If now and then he does not offer at a catachresis or Clevelandism, wresting and torturing a word into another meaning." *Dramatic Essays* (London: Dent, 1912), 7. Elsewhere Dryden refers to "clenches" (puns or quibbles) as "the lowest and most groveling kind of wit" (103).

8. "The Fish" (14).

9. "My Apish Cousins" (16).

10. "In the Days of Prismatic Color" (23).

11. "My Apish Cousins" (16).

12. *Trans*: "quivers among the pines, among the tombs"; "eternally, / Eternally gnawing his tail-end"; the first quotation is the second line of Paul Valéry's *Le Cimetière marin* [*The Graveyard by the Sea*] (1920); the second, from the end of the first version (*NRF*, July 1921) of "Ébauche d'un serpent" [Sketch of a Serpent], trans. Mark Wardle. Shortly after completing this review, TSE began writing the introduction to the bilingual edition of the poem, retitled *Le Serpent*, later published in Dec 1924 for the *Criterion* by Cobden-Sanderson. For his remarks on these lines, which Valéry changed in a later edition but which TSE insisted on reprinting as an appendix in *Le Serpent*, see "A Brief Introduction to the Method of Paul Valéry" (562).

13. "My Apish Cousins" (16).

14. The Ku Klux Klan, a white, Protestant organization active during and after the Civil War, was reorganized in Georgia in 1915 and had reached a membership of four million nationwide in the 1920s. Dressed in hooded white robes, the Klan performed nighttime cross-burnings and other terrorist rituals against blacks, Jews, Roman Catholics, and ethnic immigrants whom they saw as a threat to their culture.

To the Editor of *The Transatlantic Review*[1]

The Transatlantic Review, 1 (Jan 1924) 95-96

Dear Ford,

I welcome with extreme curiosity the appearance of the *Transatlantic Review*. If it is similar to the *Criterion* I shall take it as the best possible testimony of the blessings of the gods on our enterprises: in so far as it be different I hope that the differences will be complementary or at least antagonistic.

But from the prospectus which you have sent me I take no prescience of antagonism. Personally, I have always maintained what appears to be one of your capital tenets: that the standards of literature should be international. And personally, I am, as you know, an old-fashioned Tory.[2] We are so far in accord.

The present age, a singularly stupid one, is the age of a mistaken nationalism and of an equally mistaken and artificial internationalism. I am all for empires, especially the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and I deplore the outburst of artificial nationalities, constituted like artificial genealogies for millionaires, all over the world. The number of languages worth writing in is very small, and it seems to me a waste of time to attempt to enlarge it. On the other hand, if anyone has a genuine nationality – and a genuine nationality depends upon the existence of a genuine literature, and you cannot have a nationality worth speaking of unless you have a national literature – if anyone has a genuine nationality, let him assert it, let the Frenchman be as French, the Englishman as English, the German as German, as he can be; but let him be French or English or German in such a way that his national character will complement, not contradict, the other nationalities. Let us not have an indiscriminate mongrel mixture of socialist internationals, or of capitalist cosmopolitans, but a harmony of different functions. But the more contact, the more free exchange, there can be between the small number of intelligent people of every race or nation, the more likelihood of general contribution to what we call Literature.

I agree also that there can only be one English literature; that there cannot be British literature, or American literature.[3]

You say that you wish to provide another vehicle for the younger writers. I object that this is an unnecessary discrimination in favour of youth. In

America there seem to be a considerable number of periodicals, appearing more or less periodically, for this same purpose: and in England there do not seem to be any younger writers anyway. That is one advantage in living in England: one remains perpetually a very young writer. I have enquired after younger writers; but those who are young in years seem anxious to pretend that they are round about forty, and try as hard as possible to assimilate themselves to the generation which has just gone out of date. They have no politics, or liberal politics, (which is much the same thing); and if they had any politics, they would mix them up with their literature instead of keeping their literature clean. They have nothing. It is your business to help create the younger generation, as much as to encourage it. It does not need much encouragement.

But a review is not measured by the number of stars and scoops that it gets. Good literature is produced by a few queer people in odd corners; the use of a review is not to force talent, but to create a favourable atmosphere. And you will serve this purpose if you publish, as I hope you will find and publish, work of writers of whatever age who are too good and too independent to have found other publishers. I know that there are good writers, young and old, who belong in this category. In the *Criterion* we have endeavoured not to discriminate in favour of either youth or age, but to find good work which either could not appear elsewhere at all, or would not appear elsewhere to such advantage.

But I have only one request to make: give us either what we can support, or what is worth our trouble to attack. There is little of either in existence.

Sincerely yours,

17 Thavies Inn, London

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. As printed in the first issue of the short-lived but influential *Transatlantic Review* (Jan-Dec 1924), founded in Paris by novelist and founder of *The English Review*, Ford Maddox Ford, whom TSE met in 1921. Ezra Pound, who was influential in starting the *Transatlantic Review*, later claimed that it was deeply opposed to "the non-experimental caution" of the *Criterion* and the *Dial*. "Small Magazines," *English Journal*, 19 (Nov 1930), 699. Ford wrote to TSE about the new review on 28 Sept and asked for a word "to show we are a band of brothers: just a letter would do" (*L2* 239). When TSE inquired about the journal's editorial aims, Ford sent the draft of a lengthy prospectus, which named two purposes: "widening the field in which the younger writers of the day can find publication" and "introducing into international politics a note more

genial than that which almost universally prevails." The full prospectus is reprinted in Bernard J. Poli, *Ford Madox Ford and the Transatlantic Review* (Syracuse UP, 1967), 37-41.

TSE's letter, originally dated 11 Oct and sent from his residence at 9 Clarence Gate Gardens (see *L2* 251), was printed without date and bearing the *Criterion* address in the "Communications" section of the *Transatlantic Review* along with other commendatory letters. It was prefaced by Ford's remarks: "What – in the end – is an Editor more or less? Mr. T. S. Eliot, the editor of the only other purely literary periodical that reaches us shall answer with his definition of what is the task of the Perfect Editor" (95).

2. From the prospectus: "The politics will be those of its editor who has no party leanings save toward those of a Tory kind so fantastically old fashioned as to see no salvation save in the feudal system as practised in the fourteenth century" (40).

3. From the prospectus: "There is no British Literature, there is no American Literature: there is English Literature which embraces alike Mark Twain and Thomas Hardy with the figure of Henry James to bracket them" (37).

Four Elizabethan Dramatists: A Preface to an Unwritten Book[1]

To attempt to supplement the criticism of Lamb, Coleridge, and Swinburne on these four Elizabethan dramatists – Webster, Tourneur, Middleton, and Chapman – is a task for which I now believe the time has gone by.[2] What I wish to do is to define and illustrate a point of view toward the Elizabethan drama, which is different from that of the nineteenth-century tradition. There are two accepted and apparently opposed critical attitudes toward Elizabethan drama, and what I shall endeavour to show is that these attitudes are identical, and that another attitude is possible. Furthermore, I believe that this alternative critical attitude is not merely a possible difference of personal bias, but that it is the inevitable attitude for our time. The statement and explication of a conviction about such an important body of dramatic literature, toward what is in fact the only distinct form of dramatic literature that England has produced, should be something more than an exercise in mental ingenuity or in refinement of taste: it should be something of revolutionary influence on the future of drama. Contemporary literature, like contemporary politics, is confused by the moment-to-moment struggle for existence; but the time arrives when an examination of principles is necessary. I believe that the theatre has reached a point at which a revolution in principles should take place.

The accepted attitude toward Elizabethan drama was established on the publication of Charles Lamb's *Specimens*.[3†] By publishing these selections, Lamb set in motion the enthusiasm for poetic drama which still persists, and at the same time encouraged the formation of a distinction which is, I believe, the ruin of modern drama – the distinction between drama and literature. For the *Specimens* made it possible to read the plays as poetry while neglecting their function on the stage.[4] It is for this reason that all modern opinion of the Elizabethans seems to spring from Lamb,[5†] for all modern opinion rests upon the admission that poetry and drama are two separate things, which can only be *combined* by a writer of exceptional genius. The difference between the people who prefer Elizabethan drama, in spite of what they admit to be its dramatic defects, and the people who prefer modern drama although acknowledging that it is never good poetry,

is comparatively unimportant. For in either case, you are committed to the opinion that a play can be good literature but a bad play and that it may be a good play and bad literature – or else that it may be outside of literature altogether.

On the one hand we have Swinburne, representative of the opinion that plays exist as literature, and on the other hand Mr. William Archer, who with great lucidity and consistency maintains the view that a play need not be literature at all.[6] No two critics of Elizabethan drama could appear to be more opposed than Swinburne and Mr. William Archer; yet their assumptions are fundamentally the same, for the distinction between poetry and drama, which Mr. Archer makes explicit, is implicit in the view of Swinburne; and Swinburne as well as Mr. Archer allows us to entertain the belief that the difference between modern drama and Elizabethan drama is represented by a gain of dramatic technique and the loss of poetry.

Mr. Archer in his brilliant and stimulating book, succeeded in making quite clear all of the dramatic faults of Elizabethan drama.[7†*] What vitiates his analysis is his failure to see why these faults are faults, and not simply different conventions. And he gains his apparent victory over the Elizabethans for this reason, that the Elizabethans themselves admit the same criteria of realism that Mr. Archer asserts. The great vice of English drama from Kyd to Galsworthy has been that its aim of realism was unlimited.[8] In one play, *Everyman*, and perhaps in that one play only, we have a drama within the limitations of art; since Kyd, since *Arden of Feversham*, since *The Yorkshire Tragedy*, there has been no form to arrest, so to speak, the flow of spirit at any particular point before it expands and ends its course in the desert of exact likeness to the reality which is perceived by the most commonplace mind.[9] Mr. Archer confuses faults with conventions; the Elizabethans committed faults and muddled their conventions. In their plays there are faults of inconsistency, faults of incoherency, faults of taste, there are nearly everywhere faults of carelessness. But their great weakness is the same weakness as that of modern drama, it is the lack of a convention. Mr. Archer facilitates his own task of destruction, and avoids offending popular opinion, by making an exception of Shakespeare: but Shakespeare, like all his contemporaries, was aiming in more than one direction. In a play of Aeschylus, we do not find that certain passages are literature and other passages drama; every style of utterance in the play bears a relation to the whole and because of this relation is dramatic in itself. The imitation of life is circumscribed, and the approaches to ordinary speech and withdrawals

from ordinary speech are not without relation and effect upon each other. It is essential that a work of art should be self-consistent, that an artist should consciously or unconsciously draw a circle beyond which he does not trespass: on the one hand actual life is always the material, and on the other hand an abstraction from actual life is a necessary condition to the creation of the work of art.

Let us try to conceive how the Elizabethan drama would appear to us if we had in existence what has never existed in the English language: a drama formed within a conventional scheme – the convention of an individual dramatist, or of a number of dramatists working in the same form at the same time. And when I say convention, I do not necessarily mean any particular convention of subject matter, of treatment, of verse or of dramatic form, of general philosophy of life or any other convention which has already been used. It may be some quite new selection or structure or distortion in subject matter or technique; any form or rhythm imposed upon the world of action. We will take the point of view of persons accustomed to this convention and finding the expression of their dramatic impulses in it. From this point of view such performances as those of the Phoenix Society are most illuminating.[10] For the drama, the existence of which I suppose, will have its special conventions of the stage and the actor as well as of the play itself.[11†] An actor in an Elizabethan play is either too realistic or too abstract in his treatment, whatever system of speech, of expression and of movement he adopts. The play is for ever betraying him. An Elizabethan play was in some ways as different from a modern play, its performance is almost as much a lost art, as if it were a drama of Aeschylus or Sophocles. And in some ways it is more difficult to reproduce. For it is easier to present the effect of something in a firm convention, than the effect of something which was aiming, blindly enough, at something else. The difficulty in presenting Elizabethan plays is that they are liable to be made too modern, or falsely archaic. Why are the asides ridiculous, which Mr. Archer reprehends in *A Woman Killed with Kindness*?[12] Because they are not a convention, but a subterfuge; it is not Heywood who assumes that asides are inaudible, it is Mrs. Frankford who *pretends* not to hear Wendoll. A convention is not ridiculous: a subterfuge makes us extremely uncomfortable. The weakness of the Elizabethan drama is not its defect of realism, but its attempt at realism; not its conventions, but its lack of conventions.

In order to make an Elizabethan drama give a satisfactory effect as a work of art, we should have to find a method of acting different from that

of contemporary social drama, and at the same time to attempt to express all the emotions of actual life in the way in which they actually would be expressed: the result would be something like a performance of *Agamemnon* by the Guitrys.[13] The effect upon actors who attempt to specialize in Shakespearean or other seventeenth-century revivals is unfortunate. The actor is called upon for a great deal that is not his business, and is left to his own devices for things in which he should be trained. His stage personality has to be supplied from and confounded with his real personality. Anyone who has observed one of the great dancers of the Russian school will have observed that the man or the woman whom we admire is a being who exists only during the performances, that it is a personality, a vital flame which appears from nowhere, disappears into nothing and is complete and sufficient in its appearance.[14] It is a conventional being, a being which exists only in and for the work of art which is the ballet. A great actor on the ordinary stage is a person who also exists off it and who supplies the rôle which he performs with the person which he is. A ballet is apparently a thing which exists only as acted and would appear to be a creation much more of the dancer than of the choreographer. This is not quite true. It is a development of several centuries into a strict form. In the ballet only that is left to the actor which is properly the actor's part. The general movements are set for him. There are only limited movements that he can make, only a limited degree of emotion he can express. He is not called upon for his personality. The differences between a great dancer and a merely competent dancer is in the vital flame, that impersonal, and, if you like, inhuman force which transpires between each of the great dancer's movements.[15†] So it would be in a strict form of drama; but in realistic drama, which is drama striving steadily to escape the conditions of art, the human being intrudes. Without the human being and without this intrusion, the drama cannot be performed, and this is as true of Shakespeare as it is of Henry Arthur Jones.[16] A play of Shakespeare's and a play of Henry Arthur Jones's are essentially of the same type, the difference being that Shakespeare is very much greater and Mr. Jones very much more skilful. They are both dramatists to be read rather than seen, because it is precisely in that drama which depends upon the interpretation of an actor of genius, that we ought to be on our guard against the actor. The difference is, of course, that without the actor of genius the plays of Mr. Jones are nothing and the plays of Shakespeare are still to be read. But a true acting play is surely a play which does not depend upon the actor for anything but acting, in the sense in

which a ballet depends upon the dancer for dancing. Lest anyone should fall into a contrary misunderstanding, I will explain that I do not by any means intend the actor to be an automaton, nor would I admit that the human actor can be replaced by a marionette.[17] A great dancer, whose attention is set upon carrying out an appointed task, provides the life of the ballet through his movements; in the same way the drama would depend upon a great trained actor. The advantages of convention for the actor are precisely similar to its advantages for the author. No artist produces great art by a deliberate attempt to express his personality. He expresses his personality indirectly through concentrating upon a task which is a task in the same sense as the making of an efficient engine or the turning of a jug or a table-leg.

The art of the Elizabethans is an impure art. If it be objected that this is a prejudice of the case, I can only reply that one must criticize from some point of view and that it is better to know what one's point of view is. I know that I rebel against most[18†*] performances of Shakespeare's plays because I want a direct relationship between the work of art and myself, and I want the performance to be such as will not interrupt or alter this relationship any more than it is an alteration or interruption for me to superpose a second inspection of a picture or building upon the first. I object, in other words, to the interpretation, and I would have a work of art such that it needs only to be completed and cannot be altered by each interpretation. Now it is obvious that in realistic drama you become more and more dependent upon the actor. And this is another reason why the drama which Mr. Archer desires, as the photographic and gramophonic record of its time, can never exist. The closer a play is built upon real life, the more the performance by one actor will differ from another, and the more the performances of one generation of actors will differ from those of the next. It is furthermore obvious that what we ask involves a considerable sacrifice of a certain kind of interest. A character in the conventional play can never be as real as is the character in a realistic play while the rôle is being enacted by a great actor who has made the part his own. I can only say that wherever you have a form you make some sacrifice against some gain.

If we examine the faults which Mr. Archer finds in Elizabethan drama, it is possible to come to the conclusion (already indicated) that these faults are due to its tendencies rather than what are ordinarily called its conventions. I mean that no single convention of Elizabethan drama, however

ridiculous it may be made to appear, is essentially bad. Neither the soliloquy, nor the aside, nor the ghost, nor the blood-and-thunder, nor absurdity of place or time is in itself absurd. There are, of course, definite faults of bad writing, careless writing, and bad taste. A line-by-line examination of almost any Elizabethan play, including those of Shakespeare, would be a fruitful exercise. But these are not the faults which weaken the foundations. What is fundamentally objectionable is that in the Elizabethan drama there has been no firm principle of what is to be postulated as a convention and what is not. The fault is not with the ghost but with the presentation of a ghost on a plane on which he is inappropriate, and with the confusion between[19†] one kind of ghost and another. The three witches in *Macbeth* are a distinguished example[20†] of correct supernaturalism amongst a race of ghosts who are too frequently equivocations. It seems to me strictly an error, although an error which is condoned by the success of each passage in itself, that Shakespeare should have introduced into the same play ghosts belonging to such different categories as the three sisters and the ghost of Banquo.[21*] The aim of the Elizabethans was to attain complete realism without surrendering any of the advantages which as artists they observed in unrealistic conventions.

We shall take up the work of four Elizabethan dramatists and attempt to subject them to an analysis from the point of view which I have indicated.[22] We shall take the objections of Mr. Archer to each one of these dramatists and see if the difficulty does not reside in this confusion of convention and realism, and we must make some attempt also to illustrate the faults as distinguished from the conventions. There were, of course, tendencies toward form. There was a general philosophy of life, if it may be called such, based on Seneca and other influences which we find in Shakespeare as in the others. It is a philosophy which, as Mr. Santayana observed in an essay which passed almost unheeded, may be summarised in the statement that Duncan is in his grave.[23] Even the philosophical basis, the general attitude toward life of the Elizabethans, is one of anarchism, of dissolution, of decay. It is in fact exactly parallel and indeed one and the same thing with their artistic greediness, their desire for every sort of effect together, their unwillingness to accept any limitation and abide by it. The Elizabethans are in fact a part of the movement of progress or deterioration which has culminated in Sir Arthur Pinero and in the present regiment of Europe.[24*]

The case of John Webster, and in particular *The Duchess of Malfy*,[25†] will provide an interesting example of a very great literary and dramatic

genius directed toward chaos. The case of Middleton is an interesting one, because we have from the same hand plays so different as *The Changeling*, *Women Beware Women*, *The Roaring Girl*, and *A Game at Chess*.[26*] In the one great play of Tourneur's, the discord is less apparent, but not less real. Chapman appears to have been potentially perhaps the greatest artist of all these men: his was the mind which was the most classical, his was the drama which is the most independent in its tendency toward a dramatic form – although it may seem the most formless and the most indifferent to dramatic necessities. If we can establish the same consequence independently by an examination of the Elizabethan philosophy, the Elizabethan dramatic form, and the variations in the rhythms of Elizabethan blank verse as employed by several of the greatest dramatists, we may come to conclusions which will enable us to understand why Mr. Archer, who is the opponent of the Elizabethans, should also be unconsciously their last champion, and why he should be a believer in progress, in the growth of humanitarian feeling, and in the superiority and efficiency of the present age.

NOTES

1. As printed in *SE*; originally subtitled "I. A Preface" when it first appeared in *Criterion*, 2 (Feb 1924), 115-23; present subtitle added in *SE* (1932); rpt. without changes in *Elizabethan Essays* (1934) but omitted from the later version of that book, retitled *Essays on Elizabethan Drama* (1956). TSE began planning a series on Elizabethan drama in Sept 1923, when he told Virginia Woolf that he hoped to work solely on it and his verse play, *Sweeney Agonistes*, over the winter (*L2* 214). "I have undertaken to write four articles for the *Criterion* on four Elizabethan dramatists: Webster, Tourneur, Middleton and Chapman," he wrote to his mother in Oct 1923: "I want to make them pretty long and careful and scholarly" (*L2* 254). Though the preface, which he called "an essay on a new direction for the drama," had been "twice rewritten and finally scrapped" by 31 Dec 1923, a draft of it was complete by 6 Feb 1924 (*L2* 289).

2. For TSE's previous remarks on Lamb's *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets*, Coleridge's *Lectures and Notes upon Shakespeare and Other English Poets* and Swinburne's *Contemporaries of Shakespeare*, see "Swinburne as Critic" (115).

3†. In *Criterion*, TSE referred here and below to Lamb's *Selections*.

4. In the introduction to *Specimens*, Lamb writes that his selections – each prefaced with a headnote describing the passage's context – are most often "scenes of passion, sometimes of the deepest quality, interesting situations, serious descriptions, that which is more nearly allied to poetry than to wit." *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets* (London: Bumpus, 1813), vi.

5†. In *Criterion*: "opinion of the Elizabethans springs from Lamb,"

6. In *The Old Drama and the New* (London: Heinemann, 1923), Archer argues that two fundamental elements of drama have existed throughout history, the mimetic and the lyrical, and he asserts that modern realistic drama (like that of Henrik Ibsen, which Archer himself

translated) is the evolutionary result of the mimetic element sloughing off the impurities of the lyric element and attaining "a pure and logical art-form" (5).

7. †In *Criterion*: "stimulating book, has succeeded in"

*TSE's note:"*The Old Drama and the New* (Heinemann, 1923)."

On 5 Oct 1923, he wrote to Richard Aldington: "I am sending to Heinemann to ask them for William Archer's book . . . Can you think of any other conspicuous contemporary whom I could work in in the same way and beat about the ears, or on the other hand use as a support?" (*L2* 245-46). Archer argues that Elizabethan plays "have nothing to say to modern audiences, because they exemplify primitive and transitional types of art, portray, with much exaggeration, gross and unpleasing manners, and call for forms of virtuosity in representation which are well-nigh extinct on the modern stage" (19).

8. The most recent work by contemporary playwright John Galsworthy was the social drama *Loyalties* (1922), applauded in the *Times* of 9 Mar 1922 for "its absolute truth to life" (10).

9. The anonymous *Everyman*, which TSE taught in his 1918 Extension course, is an allegorical morality play first printed in the early sixteenth century. The anonymous *Tragedy of Mr. Arden of Feversham* (1592), which TSE believed the work of Thomas Kyd, and *The Yorkshire Tragedy* (1608), now attributed to Thomas Middleton, were both unique in that their plots derived from details of contemporary domestic crimes rather than from exotic or distant historical events. Lecturing on *Arden of Feversheam* in 1918, TSE asked, "Why was this kind of realism not more popular?" (1.754).

10. The most recent performances of the Phoenix Society – the independent London theatre group whose productions TSE regularly attended and which he defended against Archer in a 1920 letter to the *Athenaeum* – included Fletcher's *The Faithful Shepherdess* (24-25 June 1923), Jonson's *Volpone* (29 June), Marlowe's *Edward II* (18-19 Nov), Wycherley's *The Country-Wife* (17-18 Feb 1924).

11†. In *Criterion*: "the play itself. It is impossible for any Elizabethan drama to be performed in a satisfactory way. An actor in an"

12. After asserting that dramatic asides "outrage possibility, forcing us to pretend to believe that the other person or persons on the stage are deaf," Archer turns to *A Woman Killed with Kindness* (1607), a domestic tragedy by Thomas Heywood (ca. 1573-1641), II.iii, in which Master Wendoll delivers several asides while his illicit lover, the married Anne Frankford, "has to stand idly by, giving her whole mind to pretending not to hear" (40).

13. The social comedies of Sacha Guitry, who acted with his wife and father in his own productions, depended for their popularity upon the playwright's charismatic stage presence and ready wit rather than upon their similar plots. In a review of the third "Guitry season" in June 1923, a *Times* writer observed of Sacha: "You cannot imagine him in a classic part, or, indeed, in any plays but his own" (13 June 1923, 10).

14. TSE refers specifically to Russian dancer and former choreographer for the Ballets Russes, Léonide Massine, whom he had recently met and praised as "completely inhuman, impersonal, abstract" in "Dramatis Personae" (434). Diaghilev's company was performing in Monte Carlo, Monaco, at the time of the present essay's composition.

15†. In *Criterion*: "transpires through each of the great dancer's movements."

16. Henry Arthur Jones is among the playwrights whom William Archer considers heralds of the new realistic theatre in *The Old Drama and the New*. Recognized as a skilled proponent

of the "well-made play," Jones was author of popular comedies and melodramas, including *The Liars* (1897) and *Mrs. Dane's Defence* (1900), which Archer calls "a masterpiece of dramatic storytelling" (302).

17. TSE may allude to E. Gordon Craig's ideas about the advantages of using marionettes rather than human actors in "Puppets and Poets" (*Chapbook*, Feb 1921), which he discussed in his "London Letter: July, 1921" (363). He may also have in mind Alfred Kreymborg's *Puppet Plays* (1923), which he called "a great stimulation to me" while he was working on *Sweeney Agonistes* (*L2* 192).

18. †In *Criterion*: "against performances"; TSE added the word "most" and inserted the following note in *SE* (1932).

*TSE's note: "A really good performance of Shakespeare, such as the very best productions of the Old Vic and Sadler's Wells, may add much to our understanding."

In May 1932, four months before adding this note, TSE became a member of the committee of the Old Vic and Sadler's Wells Society, a cooperative group formed to support the newly reopened Sadler's Wells Theatre. TSE's personal effort on behalf of the society, he told G. B. Harrison on 18 May 1932, "represents a desire to help something in which I am very keenly interested. I also speak as a practicing member of the audience."

19†. In *Criterion*: "the constant confusion between"

20†. In *Criterion*: "The three witches are a distinguished example"

21*. TSE's note in *Criterion* and after: "This will appear to be an objection as pedantic as that of Thomas Rymer to *Othello*. But Rymer makes out a very good case." For TSE's remarks on Thomas Rymer's objections to *Othello* in *A Short View of Tragedy* (1693), see "Hamlet" (127, n. 5).

22. TSE's plan to publish four consecutive essays in the *Criterion* did not come to fruition. In the preface to *HJD*, published in Oct 1924, he wrote that such a sustained project would have required an "impossible leisure" and admitted that he had "abandoned this design in the pursuit of other policies" (546). His lecture on Chapman in Nov 1924 went unpublished (548). He included subsequent essays on Middleton (1927) and Tourneur (1931) in *Selected Essays* (1932), and he then issued the more selective *Elizabethan Essays* (1934), which compiled his previously published essays on Elizabethan drama since 1919.

23. TSE likely refers to "The Absence of Religion in Shakespeare" (1896) in which Santayana adduces Macbeth's "To-morrow" soliloquy as evidence of Shakespeare's refusal to entertain a religious worldview: "for Shakespeare, in the matter of religion, the choice lay between Christianity and nothing. He chose nothing; he chose to leave his heroes and himself in the presence of life and of death with no other philosophy than that which the profane world can suggest and understand." *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900), 152. Though Santayana does not refer to *Macbeth* III.ii.22-23 ("Duncan is in his grave; / After life's fitful fever he sleeps well"), TSE evidently associates them with his argument.

24*. TSE's note in *Criterion* and after: "Mr. Archer calls it progress. He has certain predispositions. 'Shakespeare,' he says, 'was not alive to the great idea which differentiates the present age from all that have gone before – the idea of progress.' And he admits, speaking of Elizabethan drama in general, that 'here and there a certain glimmer of humanitarian feeling is perceptible.'"

TSE quotes from two passages in *The Old Drama and the New* (125, 128), the first of which he slightly modifies: "No more than any of his contemporaries was he alive to the great idea which differentiates the present age from all that have gone before."

Archer had championed the realistic drama of Arthur Pinero in *English Dramatists of To-Day* (1882), and he devotes portions of two chapters to Pinero's early and late works in *The Old Drama and the New*, calling him "an original dramatic genius" (302).

25†. In *Criterion*: "*The Duchess of Malfi,*"

26*. TSE's note in *Criterion* (where the title was misprinted, "*A Game of Chess*") and after: "I agree with Mr. Dugdale Sykes, to whose acute observations I am under a great debt, that certain work attributed to Middleton is not Middleton's, but there appears to be no reason for questioning the authorship of the plays I have just mentioned." Henry Dugdale Sykes (1874-1932) was the author of *Sidelights on Elizabethan Drama* (1924), which includes discussions of Middleton's contested or shared authorship of *The Spanish Gypsy*, *Anything for a Quiet Life*, and others. TSE had considered printing Sykes's essay on Middleton in the *Criterion* (*L2* 222).

A Prediction in Regard to Three English Authors:[1]

Writers Who, Though Masters of Thought, are Likewise Masters of Art

Vanity Fair, 21 (Feb 1924) 29, 98

There are three English writers of whom I wish briefly to speak.[2] Two of them – Henry James and Sir James Frazer – are known in America and are beginning to be known in Europe, in translations; the third, Francis Herbert Bradley, is hardly likely to be known outside of England at all.[3†] He is, indeed, a rare writer; from 1883 to within a few months ago, his *Principles of Logic* was out of print. The republication of this work, in two volumes, with fresh supplementary essays; the appearance of a condensed edition of Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, and the continuation of a new and cheaper edition of Henry James's complete works, may give my remarks on these three writers the chronicle character which they might otherwise seem to lack.[4]

Henry James is an author who is difficult for English readers, because he is an American; and who is difficult for Americans, because he is a European; and I do not know whether he is possible to other readers at all. On the other hand, the exceptionally sensitive reader, who is neither English nor American, may have a position of detachment which is an advantage. One thing is certain, that the books of Henry James form a complete whole. One must read all of them, for one must grasp, if anything, both the unity and the progression. The gradual development, and the fundamental identity of spirit, are both important, and their lesson is one lesson.

THE CASE OF HENRY JAMES

James has suffered the usual fate of those who, in England, have outspokenly insisted on the importance of technique. His technique has received the kind of praise usually accorded to some useless, ugly, and ingenious piece of carving which has taken a very long time to make; and he is widely reproached for not succeeding in doing the things that he did not attempt to do. With "character," in the sense in which the portrayal of character is usually expected in the English novel, he had no concern; but his critics do

not understand that "character" is only one of the ways in which it is possible to grasp at reality: had James been a better hand at character, he would have been a coarser hand altogether, and would have missed the sensibility to the peculiar class of data which were his province. And the fact that, an American, his view of England – a view which very gradually dissolves in his development – was a romantic view, is a small matter. His romanticism implied no defect in observation of the things that he wanted to observe; it was not the romanticism of those who dream because they are too lazy or too fearful to face the fact; it issues, rather, from the imperative insistence of an ideal which tormented him. He was possessed by the vision of an ideal society, he *saw* (not fancied) the relations between the members of such a society. And no one in the end, has ever been more aware – or with more benignity, or less bitterness – of the disparity between possibility and fact. If his completed work failed to prove that, his last unfinished novels (*The Sense of the Past* and *The Ivory Tower*) could hardly fail to do so.[5]

The example which Henry James offered us was not that of a style to imitate, but of an integrity so great, a vision so exacting, that it was forced to the extreme of care and punctiliousness for exact expression. James did not provide us with "ideas," but with another world of thought and feeling. For such a world some have gone to Dostoievsky, some to James; and I am inclined to think that the spirit of James, so much less violent, with so much more reasonableness and so much more resignation than that of the Russian, is no less profound, and is more useful, more applicable, for our future.

THE AUTHOR OF "THE GOLDEN BOUGH"

The work of Sir James George Frazer has nothing in common with that of James, except the modest and steady and silent influence which it exerts. At first sight, Frazer is only the most eminent among many students of a science which is peculiarly English: folklore. I say peculiarly English, because, with the exception of Mannhardt, in Germany, I can think of no foreign names to set beside a whole series of English names: Sir E. B. Tylor, Robertson Smith, Miss Harrison, Miss Weston, A. B. Cook, F. M. Cornford, Dr. Rendel Harris, Hartland, Elliot Smith, and others; to say nothing of observers such as Codrington, Spencer and Gillan, Hewett, who have examined primitive races in every corner of the empire.[6]

Frazer's eminence is not merely a matter of superior erudition among writers whose standard of learning is prodigious; nor does it depend, like that of two writers who are more distinctly *sociologists*, MM. Durkheim

and Levy-Bruhl, upon brilliant theories of human behavior. On the contrary, with every fresh volume of his stupendous compendium of human superstition and folly, Frazer has withdrawn in more and more cautious abstention from the attempt to explain. The first edition of *The Golden Bough*, in two volumes, was an attempt to explain the Priest of Nemi.[7] It led to allied investigations, so that another and larger edition was required.

The work has now arrived at twelve volumes; and as Sir James has just published a one volume condensation of the twelve, it may be assumed that he considers his work complete. It is a work of no less importance for our time than the complementary work of Freud – throwing its light on the obscurities of the soul from a different angle; and it is a work of perhaps greater permanence, because it is a statement of fact which is not involved in the maintenance or fall of any theory of the author's.[8]

A VITALIZING OF THE CLASSICS

Yet it is not a mere collection of data, and it is not a theory. The absence of speculation is a conscious and deliberate scrupulousness, a positive point of view. And it is just that: a point of view, a vision, put forward through a fine prose style, that gives the work of Frazer a position above that of other scholars of equal erudition and perhaps greater ingenuity, and which gives him an inevitable and growing influence over the contemporary mind. He has extended the consciousness of the human mind into as dark a backward and abysm of time as has yet been explored.[9] And – with the other scholars whom I have mentioned – he has given a new vision of classical studies. And this will not fail to have a profound effect upon the literature of the future.

Francis Herbert Bradley is as distinctly English a figure as Sir James Frazer is Scottish. Except to the other fellows of Merton College, Oxford – and he is rarely there – he is personally hardly known. He has published four books: *Ethical Studies*, now for a long time out of print; *Appearance and Reality*, his metaphysics; a volume of collected essays, *Truth and Reality*, and the work which has just been republished, his *Principles of Logic*.[10]

My purpose is not to attempt any exposition of his philosophy, but to suggest the total effect of this philosophy upon a sensibility. This effect is all the more remarkable, because the philosophy is a *pure* philosophy: it borrows none of the persuasiveness of science, and none of the persuasiveness of literature. It is, for example, a *purer* philosophy than that of either of

his most distinguished (but younger) contemporaries: Bergson and Bertrand Russell. For Bergson makes use of science – biology and psychology – and this use sometimes conceals the incoherence of a multiplicity of points of view, not all philosophic. Has not his exciting promise of immortality[11†] a somewhat meretricious captivation?

PHILOSOPHY WITHOUT PREJUDICES

But the question is, for philosophy, says Bradley somewhere drily, not whether the soul is immortal, but whether, and in what sense, it may be said to exist here and now.[12] Bertrand Russell could never be accused of the meretricious use of science in philosophy: he is at the opposite pole from Bergson. With him, the trouble is rather that he has never been really convinced that philosophy was possible at all: he was educated as a mathematician as well, and the mathematician in him is impatient of the philosopher. Hence, his history presents the curious spectacle of a very powerful mind (not at all inferior to Bradley's) at war with itself: destroying, not so much other men's systems (though Russell has laid flat a good many) as his own.

But Bradley is wholly and solely a philosopher: he is as far from the amateurish quibbling of Lord Balfour (who is, by the way, a distinguished dabbler in metaphysics) or the dignified vacuity of Bosanquet as he is from the procedures of Bergson and Russell.[13] Philosophy may be futile or profitable, he seems to say, but if you are to pursue it at all, you must work with such and such data – which are neither literature nor science. All we can do is to accept these data and follow our argument to the end. If it ends, as it may well end, in zero, well, we have at least the satisfaction of having pursued something to the end, and of having ascertained that certain questions which occur to men to ask, are unanswerable or are meaningless. Once you accept his theory of the nature of the judgment, and it is as plausible a theory as any, you are led by his arid and highly sensitive eloquence (no English philosopher has ever written finer English) to something which, according to your temperament, will be resignation or despair – the bewildered despair of wondering why you ever wanted anything, and what it was that you wanted, since this philosophy seems to give you everything that you ask and yet to render it not worth wanting.

Now, whether the future will verify my statement of the importance of these three men in their influence upon the sensibility of one or two or more literary generations is of course a question to be left. The question which I might as well be asked is whether their influence, if it exists, has a

similar enough direction, for me to be justified in treating them together. With their "ideas" I have not been concerned; but with their influence upon sensibility through the intellect, and what this sensibility may be is not so easy to state as what it is not. It is not the sensibility of Bernard Shaw, or of Anatole France, or of Thomas Hardy: it is something infinitely more disillusioned than any of these who are chosen because they have so little in common with each other; it may be harder and more orderly; but throbbing at a higher rate of vibration with the agony of spiritual life.

NOTES

1. This essay, the last of three that TSE published in *Vanity Fair*, is the revised English version of his third "Lettre d'Angleterre" for the *NRF* (489). The original English manuscript was finished before 4 Oct 1923 and published in a French translation by Germain d'Hangest on 1 Nov. TSE then revised the English text and sent it to the editor of *Vanity Fair* on 6 Nov for use "anytime if you like it" (*L2* 235, 269). Substantial differences between the English and French versions are indicated in notes below. Because TSE's original English manuscripts have not been found, all translations in the notes are editorially supplied. Subtitle and section headings were editorially added in *Vanity Fair*.

2. For translations of the first two paragraphs in the French *NRF* version, which were not included in *Vanity Fair*, see textual note 1.

3†. In *NRF*: "Des trois écrivains anglais dont je veux surtout parler, deux, Henry James et Sir James Frazer, commencent à pénétrer en France par la traduction ; le troisième, Francis Henry Bradley, n'a guère de chance d'être jamais connu à Paris. C'est en effet un écrivain rare, même de notre côté de l'eau" [Of the three English writers about whom I would like to speak, two, Henry James and Sir James Frazer, are beginning to enter France through translations; the third, Francis Henry Bradley, has hardly any chance of ever being known in Paris. He is, in effect, an unusual writer, even on our side of the water.]

Misprinted "Francis Henry Bradley" here and in *NRF*, but given correctly after first mention.

4. Bradley's *The Principles of Logic* (1883) was published in a revised and enlarged edition in Nov 1922, the same month in which Frazer's one-volume abridgement of *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion* (London: Macmillan) appeared; Percy Lubbock's thirty-five-volume, pocket edition of *The Novels and Stories of Henry James* (London: Macmillan) appeared in 1921-23. On a brief list of English literary "precursors" that he sent to E. R. Curtius on 14 Aug 1923, TSE ranked James first and remarked, after several others, "I shd be tempted to add *Frazer* and *Bradley*" (*L2* 186).

5. TSE reviewed both posthumously published novels, *The Ivory Tower* and *The Sense of the Past* (1917), under the pseudonym Enrique Gomez in Jan 1918 (1.653).

6. All influential pioneers in folklore and anthropology, many of whose work TSE studied in his 1913-14 Harvard graduate course with Josiah Royce and wrote about in "The Interpretation of Primitive Ritual" and later in four 1916 book reviews. He had recently returned to consult several studies of primitive culture for his review "The Beating of a Drum" (471) and was rereading others on myth and the attic stage, especially that of F. M. Cornford, in preparation for his own experimental drama, *Sweeney Agonistes* (*L2* 208).

The work of early German folklorist Wilhelm Mannhardt, author of *Germanische Mythen* (1858) and *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte* (1877, *Ancient Wood and Field Cults*), on ancient myth and peasant superstitions influenced Frazer, who acknowledged his debt in the first edition of *The Golden Bough*. TSE's list also includes nineteenth-century evolutionists Sir Edward Burnett Tylor and William Robertson Smith; members of the Cambridge Ritualist school, Jane Ellen Harrison, Arthur Bernard Cook, Francis M. Cornford, and Gilbert Murray (whose name appeared in *NRF* but was not in *VF*); folklorist and scholar of Arthurian literature Jessie Weston (1850-1928), author of *From Ritual to Romance* (1920), which TSE credited with deeply influencing *TWL*; biblical scholar (James) Rendel Harris, whose *The Ascent of Olympus* TSE reviewed in 1918 (1.764); Welsh folklorist Edwin Sidney Hartland (1848-1927), who was named the first James George Frazer speaker in Social Anthropology at Oxford in 1922; medical doctor and diffusionist proponent Sir Grafton Elliot Smith (1871-1937), whom TSE invited to contribute to the *Criterion* in May 1923; Anglican missionary Robert Henry Codrington; Sir Walter Baldwin Spencer and Francis James Gillen, who wrote together about aboriginal Australian tribes.

7. At the outset of both the first (2 vols, 1890) and second editions (6 vols, 1900) of *The Golden Bough*, Frazer describes an ancient ritual at the temple of Diana near Lake Nemi, south of Rome, where a fugitive slave could attain the office of priest-king (*rex Nemorensis*) by entering a sacred grove, breaking a limb from a guarded tree (which Frazer connected with the "golden bough" in Virgil's *Aeneid*), and killing his predecessor in one-to-one combat. The preface to the enlarged third edition (12 vols, 1906-15) lessened the dependence of the work's overall argument on the Nemi priesthood ritual.

8. The importance of distinguishing between fact and interpretation in the social sciences was the focus of TSE's graduate essay, "The Interpretation of Primitive Ritual," which praises Frazer's comparative method but condemns his interpretations (1.106).

9. *The Tempest* I.ii.49-50: "What seest thou else / In the dark backward and abysm of time?"

10. TSE went up to Merton College in Oct 1914 on a traveling fellowship; Bradley had been a fellow there since 1870. His dissertation discusses each of Bradley's works mentioned here, including *Ethical Studies* (1876); *Appearance and Reality* (1893); *Essays on Truth and Reality* (1914); and *The Principles of Logic*.

11†. In *NRF*: "Sa troublante promesse d'immortalité ('. . . même la mort . . .') ne participe-t-elle d'aucune méthode de séduction ?" [His disturbing promise of immortality (". . . even death. . ."), does it not participate in some method of seduction?].

The present version omits TSE's parenthetical quotation in *NRF* from Bergson (". . . même la mort . . ."), a phrase that appears at the end of the third chapter of *Évolution créatrice* (Paris: Alcan, 1907), which describes the *élan vital* as "une immense armée . . . capable de culbuter toutes les résistances et de franchir bien des obstacles, même peut-être la mort" (294) ["one immense army . . . able to beat down every resistance and clear the most formidable obstacles, perhaps even death"]. *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1911), 271.

12. In *The Principles of Logic* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, & Co., 1883), Bradley writes that even if a Creator could reveal to us the immortality of the soul, philosophers should be content

to conclude that it and other things not perceived by the senses "exist *for us*," as ideas alongside and simultaneously with our present perceptions, adding that whether they "really exist *for themselves*, is a question of metaphysics" (74).

13. Bernard Bosanquet was, with Bradley, a principal proponent of British philosophical idealism, which came under the attack of Russell and the Cambridge new realists. TSE studied Bosanquet's work in graduate school, including his major text *Logic* (1888), from which he drew in his dissertation.

TEXTUAL NOTE

1. The following two paragraphs began the essay in *NRF* but not in *Vanity Fair.* In the absence of TSE's original English manuscript, the translation here is given by the editors:

> I have just read with great interest in the September issue of the *Nouvelle Revue française* the observations of Mr. Crémieux on the subject of a *Survey* (that I have not yet read) *on the Masters of the New Literature*.[*] And I recalled similar speculations (except that any man's opinions are always dependent, to a large extent, upon his own life) which I had, several months ago, thought to make the subject of a "London Letter" for the *Nouvelle Revue française*. There will probably be more people among the English writers of my generation, that is to say between thirty and forty years old, to protest violently against my selection than to give it even a lukewarm approval. I hope only that what it has of the personal will give it an interest that compensates for what it lacks in authority. I have chosen to consider the *masters of thought* rather than the *masters of art*, because this choice offers less difficulty and because such a discussion will undoubtedly interest more people. But one must not forget that all of these *masters* are so in a large part because of their style, and that at least one of them is a very great master of art.
>
> One must acknowledge, by the way, that to a rather great extent the most powerful influence has come from France; and it is only fitting on this occasion to mention some names. On this part of my generation about whom I can speak with sympathy, I know how strong the influence of Remy de Gourmont was; and Gourmont is one of the guides who made us study Flaubert, who was simultaneously a master both of art and thought. And in poetry (I am still speaking only for a certain group) Rimbaud, Corbière and Laforgue were for us *masters of art* more than any English poet of their time. Moreover, I do not find that it is always possible, whether dealing with the English or the French, to separate mastery of thought and mastery of art. With a few exceptions: I can attest to the important influence on my intellectual development exercised by *L'Avenir de l'intelligence* and *Belphégor* (not that I want to classify Mr. Maurras and Mr. Benda together), and as well, without a doubt, at a certain time, *Matière et mémoire*, books which in my eyes certainly involved the mastery of thought but (I repeat, in my eyes) not the mastery of art.[*]

* "*New Literature*": Benjamin Crémieux's "*Le bilan d'une enquête*" [Report on a Survey], a review of *Enquête sur les maîtres de la jeune littérature* [Survey on the Masters of the New Literature], by Henri Rambaud et Pierre Varillon (Paris: Bloud & Gay, 1923), in *NRF* 21 (1 Sept 1923), 287-94. The survey printed responses from several generations of prominent French

authors to two questions about major influences on their work and the directions of contemporary literature. Regular *NRF* reviewer Crémieux (1888-1944) objected to the conclusions of the editors (who named Charles Maurras, Maurice Barrès, and Paul Borget as the three crucial "masters"), on the grounds that the younger writers who responded to the survey were disproportionately catholic and royalist.

* "mastery of art": For Julien Benda's critique of romanticism and of the classicist Maurras in *Belphégor*, see TSE's "A French Romantic" (275).; for TSE's 1913 graduate essay on portions of Bergson's *Matière et mémoire: Essai sur la relation du corps à l'esprit* [*Matter and Memory: Essay on the Relation of Body and Spirit*] (1896), see [Inconsistencies in Bergson's Idealism] (1.67).

A Commentary[1]

The Criterion: A Quarterly Review, 2 (Apr 1924) 231-35

THE WORKS OF T. E. HULME

The posthumous volume of *Speculations* of T. E. Hulme (Kegan Paul) appears to have fallen like a stone to the bottom of the sea of print.[2] With its peculiar merits, this book is most unlikely to meet with the slightest comprehension from the usual reviewer: with all its defects – it is an outline of work to be done, and not an accomplished philosophy – it is a book of very great significance. When Hulme was killed in Flanders in 1917, he was known to a few people as a brilliant talker, a brilliant amateur of metaphysics, and the author of two or three of the most beautiful short poems in the language. In this volume he appears as the forerunner of a new attitude of mind, which should be the twentieth-century mind, if the twentieth century is to have a mind of its own. Hulme is classical, reactionary, and revolutionary; he is the antipodes of the eclectic, tolerant, and democratic mind of the end of the last century.[3] And his writing, his fragmentary notes and his outlines, is the writing of an individual who wished to satisfy himself before he cared to enchant a cultivated public.

HULME AND CLASSICISM

Hulme is a solitary figure in this country: his closest affinities are in France, with Charles Maurras, Albert Sorel, and Pierre Lasserre.[4] Compared with these men, Hulme is immature and unsubstantial; but he had the great advantage of a creative gift. The weakness from which the classical movement in France has suffered is that it has been a critique rather than a creation; the movement may claim Paul Valéry, but that elusive genius will hardly allow itself to be placed. It would be as tenable, and as dubious, to claim James Joyce in England. Of both of these writers it may as cogently be said that they belong to a new age chiefly by representing, and perhaps precipitating, consummately in their different ways the close of the previous epoch. Classicism is in a sense reactionary, but it must be in a profounder sense revolutionary. A new classical age will be reached when the dogma, or *ideology*, of the critics is so modified by contact with creative

writing, and when the creative writers are so permeated by the new dogma, that a state of equilibrium is reached.

For what is meant by a classical moment in literature is surely a moment of *stasis*, when the creative impulse finds a form which satisfies the best intellect of the time, a moment when a type is produced.

THE UNIVERSITY PRESSES

The University presses have done a great deal of useful work, besides printing a number of books which might well have been left to the hazards of commercial publishing; and they have also left a great deal of useful work undone, in the way of cheap reprints in correct texts. It is true that one collection of cheap reprints exists, not so extensive as the Everyman Library, and containing many volumes which are accessible in cheap editions elsewhere. To the public spirit, or the sagacity of such publishers as John Lane and Routledge, has been left the publication of two recent excellent series.[5]* These are volumes which are hardly likely to be lucrative to the publishers, but which should be kept in print to perpetuity. It ought to be possible for a person of small means to possess himself of the sermons of Lancelot Andrewes, the History of Clarendon, the works of Bolingbroke, the poems of Denham or Oldham, or the *complete* works of any Elizabethan dramatist, without several years' search through the secondhand bookstalls.[6] And only a subsidised press, such as the University Presses, can perform this function.

THE HONOURABLE BERTRAND RUSSELL AND CULTURE

Mr. Bertrand Russell, writing in the March *Dial*, expresses some interesting opinions on the nineteenth century and on men of culture:

> When one views the nineteenth century in perspective, it is clear that science is its only claim to distinction. Its literary men were mostly second-rate, its philosophers sentimental, its artists inferior to those of earlier times. Science ruthlessly forced novelties upon it, while men of "culture" tried to preserve the old picturesque follies by wrapping them in a mist of muddled romanticism. Until "culture" has made its peace with science, it will remain outside the main current of events, feeble and querulous, sighing for the past. The world that science has been making may be disgusting, but it is the world in which we have to live; and it condemns to futility all who are too fastidious to notice it.[7]

One is immediately struck by the arrogance of the scientist. No literary man would pretend to sweep aside the whole of the science of any century with the magnificence with which Mr. Russell dismisses nineteenth-century literature and art. And the truth seems to us to be exactly the reverse of Mr. Russell's implication. The man of letters or the man of "culture" of the present time is far too easily impressed and overawed by scientific knowledge and ability; the aristocracy of culture has abdicated before the demagogy of science. In consequence, a mathematician like Mr. Russell, or even some pretender to scientific authority without Mr. Russell's achievement, can more easily persuade the populace in literary opinion than will the man with a genuine competence in literature. Democracy appears whenever the governors of the people lose the conviction of their right to govern: the claims of the scientists are fortified by the cowardice of men of letters.

One draws furthermore from Mr. Russell's paragraph an edifying commentary on the ability of the scientist to think clearly outside of his own sphere. It is curious that in a paragraph which begins with a reference to Flaubert, Mr. Russell should have accused men of culture of trying "to preserve the old picturesque follies by wrapping them in a mist of muddled romanticism."[8] This is the most remarkable criticism of Flaubert that we have ever heard. Of course, culture is increasingly rare, and the detection of culture from its numerous imitations is a task requiring technical skill. Yet Mr. Russell, who is a great philosopher, has himself made at least two contributions of inestimable value to culture, *The Philosophy of Leibniz* and *Principles of Mathematics*.[9] It is all the more to be regretted that he should have formed such a vulgar conception of culture and it is deplorable that any article bearing Mr. Russell's name should end with a phrase of sentimental brutality.

THE VERY REVEREND W. R. INGE AND BYRON

But a more insidious attack upon culture is that made, in writing of the Byron Centenary, by the Dean of St. Paul's. Dean Inge attacks culture from within; by violent and unmeasured statements on literary matters in his occasional essays in an evening newspaper.[10] It is possible that the Dean feels it necessary to write down to the level of newspaper readers: if so, he is wholly mistaken; for nothing is ever gained by writing *down* to any level; writing *down* is itself an assertion of superiority which no one is entitled to make. The paper in question happens to be one of the best of our evening

journals; but even if it were not, the Underground Railway public deserves a little better food from a writer whose scholarship and ecclesiastical preferment command respect. It is not merely that Dean Inge says nothing about Byron of any novelty or interest, or that he makes a statement about Byron which is manifestly untrue: his assertion that Byron had no ear, which is sufficiently confuted by the late W. P. Ker's essay in the *Criterion* of last October.[11] What is more important and more dangerous to culture, is the violence of Dean Inge's abuse on hearsay: "Our very modern poets and painters," says Dean Inge, "who write verses that will not scan, and paint pictures which suggest the work of a very unpleasant child, are said to despise Milton and Raphael." Dean Inge ought to have informed himself of the names of the artists who despise Milton and Raphael, the respects in which they despise them, and their reasons for doing so. "The romantic revival a hundred years ago disparaged Dryden and Pope, who have not yet recovered their prestige." Again, Dean Inge is ill informed. But the most remarkable combination of violence, prejudice, ignorance, and confusion is found in the following sentence: "But I venture to differ, and to think that Greek sculpture is absolutely beautiful, while Cubist art is intrinsically and objectively hideous." To what period of Greek sculpture does the Dean refer? What does he mean by *absolute* beauty? And what particular works does he include under the term Cubist? But perhaps Dean Inge is one of the men of "culture" whom Mr. Russell has in mind. If so, we are disposed to mollify our criticism of Mr. Russell.

MISS ATHENE SEYLER

In the revival of the *Country Wife* by the Phoenix Society, Mr. Balliol Holloway excelled himself in the rôle of Mr. Horner, and Miss Isabel Jeans in the title-rôle performed a difficult part with great success: but in the outburst of approval which followed, it is to be regretted that Miss Athene Seyler failed to receive adequate appreciation for the most individual piece of acting in the performance.[12] Miss Seyler is probably the finest living actress of comedy in England; her personality commands the scene whenever she appears. She played the part of Lady Fidget with a kind of cold ferocity, a pure and undefiled detachment which make her worthy to rank in that supreme class which includes Marie Lloyd and Nellie Wallace. Miss Seyler has also a gift of expression and gesture; beautiful hands, and knows how to use them; distinctions extremely uncommon amongst the usual suburban manners of the comedy stage.

KING LEAR

But the finest performance in the history of the Phoenix Society was that of *King Lear*.[13] It is commonly said, we suppose on the authority of Charles Lamb, that *King Lear* is not a play to be acted;[14] as if any play could be better in the reading than in the representation. It is more likely, to judge from the response of the audience, that *King Lear* is a work of such immense power that it offends and scandalises ordinary citizens of both sexes. *King Lear* is a play which demands from the whole company not only fine acting but perfect co-operation, and it is a great achievement for the Phoenix Society actors to have arrived at such harmony in the time at their disposal. In a performance which was almost flawless may be marked especially the success of Hubert Carter as Lear, of Duncan Yarrow as Edgar (a most difficult rôle), of Leon Quartermaine as the Fool, and of Frank Cochrane and Frank Cellier as Gloucester and Kent.[15] The collaboration of the actors in the storm scenes made this part of the play an event in a lifetime. It is to be hoped that the Phoenix Society may give a supplementary performance of *King Lear* at the end of their season with the same cast.

The play of *King Lear* can never be popular in a civilisation so corrupted with literary culture that it resents what it cannot diminish. For there is a form of literary culture which shrinks from direct contact with a great work of art. In reading a play you can avoid this contact; you may talk about the play, or you may write about it, or you may read what has been written about it; but if you sit through a performance in a theatre, you cannot attend to anything but the play itself. This aversion for the work of art, this preference for the derivative, the marginal, is an aspect of the modern democracy of culture. We say democracy advisedly: that meanness of spirit, that egotism of motive, that incapacity for surrender or allegiance to something outside of oneself, which is a frequent symptom of the soul of man under democracy.[16] The prospects for the theatre, therefore, are not encouraging.[17]

CRITES[18]

NOTES

1. This was the first of TSE's regular contributions (printed at the beginning of each issue) under this title, which he referred to on 30 Mar as "a new series of Editorial meditations which I have started" (*L2* 347). It was finished before 6 Apr 1924, when the proofs were corrected, though TSE was still considering adding "two or three more paragraphs" the following day (*L2* 355).

2. Herbert Read's posthumous edition of T. E. Hulme's selected prose, *Speculations: Essays on Humanism and the Philosophy of Art*, was published in Dec 1923 but bore the date 1924. TSE received his copy on 15 Dec and wrote to Read the next day: "Many thanks. I must have an article about it in the *Criterion* – if I can't think of anyone else I shall do it myself – certainly a congenial subject" (*L2* 283). TSE had reviewed Hulme's translation of Sorel's *Reflections on Violence* (1.558) and praised him as both critic and poet; see for instance "Reflections on *Vers Libre*" (1.511).

3. TSE's characterization of the "eclectic, tolerant, and democratic mind" may also refer implicitly to John Middleton Murry, with whom he was engaged in public debate on the merits of Romanticism and Classicism and whose latest defense of the Romantic point of view, "Romanticism and the Tradition," was published in the same issue as the present "Commentary" (272-95).

4. Three French political thinkers who influenced Hulme's ideas and whom he mentions in *Speculations*: Charles Maurras, leader and chief ideologue of the monarchist political movement, L'Action française; Georges Sorel (whom TSE mistakenly calls Albert Sorel, the nineteenth-century French historian), staunch opponent of capitalism and liberal democracy and author of *Réflexions sur la violence* (1908), which Hulme translated in 1914; and Pierre Lasserre, neoclassical literary critic and author of *Le Romantisme français* (1907), whom Hulme met in Paris in 1911. TSE discussed all three in his 1916 Extension lectures (1.471).

5. *TSE's note: "*The Bodley Head Quartos* (John Lane). *The Broadway Translations* (G. Routledge & Co., Ld.)."

John Lane (1854-1925) co-founded the Bodley Head bookshop and publishing house, best known for *The Yellow Book: An Illustrated Quarterly* (1894-97) and Wyndham Lewis's *Blast* (1914-15). The Bodley Head Quartos, inexpensive reprints of Elizabethan and Jacobean pamphlets and plays, were edited by G. B. Harrison and published in fifteen volumes from 1923 to 1926. TSE was a subscriber to the series and wrote to Lane on 10 Mar: "I propose to give a notice of your excellent series . . . as soon as possible" (*L2* 340). George Routledge & Co. was incorporated in 1851 by the London bookseller George Routledge (1812-88). Its popular and longstanding *Broadway Translations* series, later edited by Richard Aldington, began with the publication of Hans Jakob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen's *Simplicissimus the Vagabond* (1668) in 1912.

6. TSE owned an 1887 edition of Andrewes' *Seventeen Sermons on the Nativity* (London: Griffith Farran Okeden & Welsh). Edward Hyde, 1st Earl of Clarendon (1609-74), historian and royal statesman, wrote in exile the *History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England* (1702-04).

7. The last paragraph of Bertrand Russell's "A Motley Pantheon," a review of *Creative Spirits of the Nineteenth Century*, by George Brandes, in the *Dial*, 76 (Mar 1924), 243-45. *Read*: "When one views the Nineteenth Century"

TSE sent Russell a proof copy of the present "Commentary" on 8 Apr, advising him that it was not an attack but "simply a legitimate dispute . . . you must know that I am not a likely person to make anything in the nature of a personal attack upon you." "Your opinion is different from mine," Russell responded on 12 June, "but why shouldn't it be? Neither is founded on reason" (*L2* 359).

8. Immediately before the passage that TSE quotes above, Russell remarks of the book that he is reviewing: "I have said nothing of the essays on Renan and Flaubert. They say the usual things pleasantly, but add little to our understanding of their subjects" (245).

9. TSE drew upon Russell's *A Critical Exposition of the Philosophy of Leibniz* (1900) in a 1918 philosophical review for the *Monist* (1.440), and he had studied it and *The Principles of Mathematics* (1903) at Harvard.

10. "Our Changing Literary Taste. Old Idols Neglected: Byron's Place among the Poets." *The Evening Standard* (10 Mar 1924), 7. William Ralph Inge (1860-1954), Anglican Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in London from 1911 to 1934, wrote a semi-regular column for the *Evening Standard* from 1921 to 1946 and was the author of *Christian Mysticism* (1899), *The Philosophy of Plotinus* (1918) and other works on mysticism and Neoplatonism. TSE met Inge when the two were among the guest speakers at the Lyceum Club's annual dinner in Dec 1920 (*L1* 522).

11. Ker defended Byron's skilled versification in "Byron: An Oxford Lecture," *Criterion*, 2 (Oct 1923), 1-15.

12. The Phoenix Society's production of William Wycherley's *The Country-Wife* (1675) ran at the Regent Theatre on 17-18 Feb 1924. A *Times* reviewer (19 Feb) praised Isabel Jeans (1891-1985) and Baliol Holloway for their performances and wrote that Athene Seyler (1889-1990) played her part "for all the part is worth, and it is not her fault that as time goes on it seems to be worth less and less" (10). Seyler played the role of Lady Fidget, an upper-class woman whose public declarations of virtue serve only to disguise her raucous drinking, lewd jokes, and adulterous affairs. Seyler had gained renown for her roles in Nigel Playfair's Restoration revivals at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith since 1920.

13. The Phoenix Society performed *King Lear* at the Regent Theatre on 30-31 Mar 1924; TSE attended the first night with Virginia Woolf.

14. In "On the Tragedies of Shakespeare, Considered with Reference to their Fitness for Stage Representation" (1811), Lamb writes: "To see Lear acted, – to see an old man tottering about the stage with a walking-stick, turned out of doors by his daughters in a rainy night, has nothing in it but what is painful and disgusting. We want to take him into shelter and relieve him. That is all the feeling which the acting of Lear ever produced in me. But the Lear of Shakespeare cannot be acted. . . . Lear is essentially impossible to be represented on a stage." *Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*, vol 1 (London: Methuen, 1903), 107. TSE addressed Lamb's argument in his 1918 Extension lectures (1.755).

15. Actors Hubert Carter (1869-1934), Duncan Yarrow (b. 1884), Leon Quartermaine (1876-1967), Frank Cochrane (1882-1962), Frank Cellier (1884-1948); for TSE's complimentary letters to Carter, Yarrow, Cellier, and director Allen Wade after the performance, see *L2* 360-62.

16. An echo of the title of Oscar Wilde's essay "The Soul of Man under Socialism" (1891).

17. In her diary entry for 26 May 1924, Virginia Woolf reflected on TSE's conclusions here: "He took me to Lear . . . & we both jeered & despised; & now he comes out in the Criterion with solemn and stately rebuke of those who jeer & despise. I taxed him, lightly with this: he sat tight & said that he meant what he wrote" (*Diary* 2.302).

18. The pseudonym "Crites," which TSE used in his editorial commentaries until Jan 1926, may derive from a speaker in Dryden's dialogue, *Of Dramatic Poesy* (1668). In *John Dryden: The Poet, the Dramatist, the Critic* (1932), TSE later professed his admiration for the dialogue's

prefatory section, which refers to Crites as "a person of sharp judgment, and somewhat too delicate a taste in wit, which the world have mistaken in him for ill-nature." *Dramatic Essays by John Dryden* (London: Dent, 1912), 6. The pseudonym may also derive from Crites in Ben Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*, a learned, sharp-tongued poet and servant of the gods who exposes the hypocrisies of Cynthia's courtiers.

A Commentary[1]

The Criterion: A Quarterly Review, 2 (July 1924) 371-75

THE PROFESSOR OF POETRY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

It is somewhat late in the day to comment upon the inaugural lecture delivered by Professor Garrod on February 13, but the occasion is one which justifies retrospective comment.[2] Mr. Garrod chose a difficult subject for himself: he chose to deal with the characteristics of contemporary poetry. He rightly refrained from illustrating by the use of names and quotations what he means by "contemporary poetry"; such precision might have been invidious, and would have been inappropriate. On the other hand, much of what he says loses its value from the fact that there is almost no statement which can be made of contemporary poetry as a whole. One must first define contemporary poetry by a list of the contemporary writers whom one believes to be poets, and this was impossible for Professor Garrod to do. In consequence we are at a loss, for example, when he says that "in our time, more than in any other, poetry and the study of poetry take their share in the formulation of the new and large demands for political and moral liberty."[3] This is a characteristic which we are unable to apply.

But when Mr. Garrod turns to either more general or more definite observations he says many things which are agreeable to hear. He suggests tentatively that poetry might be made better by an increased attention to the theory of it, and we should only suggest, in return, that he might have made his sentence more dogmatic.[4] He pays merited and appropriate tributes to Matthew Arnold and to Aristotle, and his remarks on the derivation of the philosophy of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley from Hartley are exactly of the sort that make historical criticism valuable.[5]

S. C. R.

The Society for Cultural Relations between the Peoples of the British Commonwealth and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics has distributed a circular, inviting membership at a minimum subscription of five

shillings a year.[6] The circular explains the objects of the Society, which are four:

(1) To collect and diffuse information in both countries on developments in Science, Education, Philosophy, Art, Literature and Social and Economic Life;
(2) To organise lectures and an interchange of lecturers, conferences, exhibitions, etc., and to arrange for the publication and translation of papers and books;
(3) To provide opportunities for social intercourse;
(4) To take any action deemed desirable to forward the intellectual and technical progress of both peoples.

The list of British supporters which is given includes many distinguished names. We have no doubt that these supporters are fully informed and satisfied concerning the origin and purpose of this society, but an ordinary member of the public receiving such a circular is entitled to ask certain questions. Is this society initiated under the auspices of the present Government of Russia? If so, what form does the government support take? We do not imply that a society of this kind is necessarily to be avoided when it is backed by a foreign Government. We only suggest that, if there is governmental backing, the public on which the benefits are to be conferred, is entitled to know the facts. For, however disinterested a society may be in its attempt to introduce a knowledge of foreign culture into England, a Government can never be expected to be wholly impartial in its choice of the material which it presents to a foreign audience. The circular in question suggests to an ignorant member of the public some remote possibility of government interest. For it states that "in science, in the achievements of literature and art, in the theories and practice of education, and in social work, the U.S.S.R. is showing constructive energy." To an ignorant member of the public, the use of the title "U.S.S.R." rather than "Russia" has rather an official sound.

We should also be inclined to inquire what reciprocal benefits the U.S.S.R. is to receive in return for those it will bestow on Great Britain. It is proposed to include amongst these blessings a "conversazione" and an "Exhibition of Russian Posters and Leaflets for popularising Science and Health." We would gladly contribute five shillings or more to the diffusion of English culture in Russia or in the States of the U.S.S.R., but we should prefer that our money be laid out in a different way.

THE UNIVERSITY PRESSES

In the April number of *The Criterion* we made some suggestions toward increasing the utility of the University Presses.[7] We have since received from Mr. Humphrey Milford a volume in a series entitled "The Oxford Miscellany." This volume consists of select poems by Lord de Tabley, a minor Victorian poet whose works are worth preserving.[8] Criticising the Miscellany as a whole, one can say that it is too miscellaneous, and that it contains some volumes which can easily enough be obtained elsewhere. The section of literary history and criticism, however, is interesting because it contains a volume of Jeffrey's *Criticism* and Morgann's *Falstaff*.[9] It is to be hoped that this section will be extended to include some specimens of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century criticism.

CRITICISM

For the earlier critics, whatever their limitations, kept their eye on the object: their criticism was *literary* criticism. There has been a growing and alarming tendency in our time for literary criticism to be something else; to be the expression of an attitude "toward life" or of an attitude toward religion or of an attitude toward society, or of various humanitarian emotions.[10] There is also a tendency for literary criticism to turn, under the baleful influence of Charles Lamb, into the polite literary essay. We must distinguish between these various tendencies, for it would be unjust to confuse Mr. Edmund Gosse and Mr. Squire with Mr. Middleton Murry or the late Mr. Clutton Brock.[11] Of all these tendencies toward obliteration of distinctions, the most dangerous is the tendency to confuse literature with religion – a tendency which can only have the effect of degrading literature and annihilating religion. This particular heresy has lately been dealt with very ably by Monsieur Jacques Rivière in an article in the *Nouvelle Revue Française* on the Crisis of the Concept of Literature.[12]

THE PRIVATE PRESSES

We learn with great regret that the Egoist Press has ceased to exist.[13] Amongst the reasons given for its termination is the multiplication of other private presses which can perform the same services. But the conclusion of the Egoist Press deserves more than a passing comment. It performed a service that is one function of the private press. It made possible the publication of the works of authors then unknown which would never have been accepted by the larger publishing houses. It was the Egoist Press

which published James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and amongst the properties which the Egoist Press now transfers are all the works of Mr. Joyce, with the exception of *Ulysses*; and in its short list were included books by Wyndham Lewis, Ezra Pound, Marianne Moore, H. D., and Mr. Richard Aldington's "Poets' Translations Series."[14] With complete disinterestedness and modesty the Egoist Press performed services to literature wholly out of proportion to its capital and position.

Amongst existing private presses the Hogarth Press carries on a part of the same task; other private presses, such as the Nonesuch Press, are occupied with producing beautiful editions of old authors.[15] A new press which is welcome is that of Frederick Etchells and Hugh Macdonald, who announce the Haslewood Reprints.[16] Sir Thomas Browne's *Letter to a Friend*, which is the first of the series, is an admirable reproduction of the first edition; and the volumes of the series are published at very moderate prices.

In both of these directions, the private press will have a function complementary to that of the publishing house and equally important.

THE PHOENIX SOCIETY

The Phoenix Society closed a brilliant season with its performance of *The Old Bachelour*.[17] The play, although it has moments of brilliant dialogue, is for the most part tedious and ill-constructed; nevertheless, since everybody has seen *The Way of the World*, it was a useful service to have included in this year's programme a specimen of Congreve. The play itself is not only far below *The Way of the World*, but is signally inferior to Wycherley's *Country Wife*.[18] The comic characters, Sir Joseph Wittol and Captain Bluffe (the latter well acted by the reliable Mr. Roy Byford), are descendants of stock Elizabethan types;[19] and the conventional morality of seventeenth-century comedy displays itself more wearisome and antiquated than in either of the other plays. But it is an interesting and valuable experience to have had so much of the Restoration comedy, if only we may realise its feebleness and timidity compared with that of the best Elizabethans. And the presentation of these comedies gives further food for meditation. We have only to turn to the pages of any nineteenth-century critic of Restoration literature, including the great Taine himself, to realise the remoteness of the nineteenth century from ourselves. For the nineteenth century really thought that the harmless and childlike morality of Restoration drama was disgusting, whilst to us it is merely weariness and ennui.[20] The plays of the

Restoration record an ethic in some ways as remote from our own as is that of Mr. Bernard Shaw.

Besides the individual performances mentioned in our last Commentary, and the Edward II of Mr. Yarrow, what stands out in retrospect is the general high level of acting and the remarkable degree of co-operation in the performances.[21] It is to be hoped that the Phoenix Society will be able to secure many of the same actors and actresses next year. And it is to be desired that the Society may include in the programme for next year another example of Elizabethan comedy, such as one of Middleton's, as well as one of the less frequently performed plays of Shakespeare, such as *Pericles* or *Timon*.[22] Whatever the programme chosen by the committee may be, the Society will continue to merit and to need an endowment, from such patrons as can afford more than their subscription, to make it a permanent institution.

CRITES

NOTES

1. Composed between 1 June, when TSE saw *The Old Bachelor* (which he mentions below), and 12 June, when he told Virginia Woolf that the issue was complete (*L2* 444).

2. Classical literary scholar Heathcote William Garrod (1878-1960), a fellow at Merton College since 1904, was elected to the prestigious Oxford Professorship of Poetry in 1923 upon the death of its previous holder, W. P. Ker; his inaugural lecture was delivered at the Oxford University Examinations Schools on 13 Feb and published as *The Profession of Poetry* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1924).

3. TSE combines two of Garrod's statements; the first reads: "I find, in this disquiet of the times, no circumstance of happier augury than the fact that more than at any other season, as I think, in our history, poetry and the study of poetry engage interest and inform action"; the second statement, a footnote to the first, begins: "In saying that they 'inform action,' I am thinking especially of their share in the formulation of the new and large demands for political and moral liberty" (2).

4. Garrod writes: "the problem of poetizing the complexity of our material civilization is less easy than a good deal of modern practice might seem to imply. I am even disposed to believe that poetry might be made better by an increased attention to the theory of it. That is only academic ignorance; or it may pass as such" (8).

5. Garrod remarks the intellectual debt owed by the Romantic poets to David Hartley, author of *Observations on Man, his Frame, his Duty, and his Expectations* (1749), who "sought to explain the whole of experience and knowledge as the result of a purely mechanical combination of the impressions of sense" (22).

6. The S. C. R. (later "The Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR") was one of many foreign organizations formed in 1923-24 under the auspices of the Soviet government in order to supervise cultural exchange between the newly formed Soviet State and prominent Western

intellectuals, as well as to attract Soviet sympathizers and conduits of influence abroad. The society boasted illustrious members, including Bertrand Russell, G. B. Shaw, E. M. Forster, Leonard and Virginia Woolf, and Aldous and Julian Huxley.

7. See TSE's Apr 1924 "Commentary" (521).

8. Sir Humphrey Sumner Milford (1877-1952) was publisher at Oxford University Press from 1913 to 1945. *The Select Poems of Lord de Tabley*, ed. John Drinkwater (London: H. Milford) appeared earlier in 1924. John Byrne Leicester Warren, 3rd Baron de Tabley (1835-95) was the author of *Philoctetes* (1866), which gained the respect of Tennyson and Browning, and of the popular *Poems, Dramatic and Lyrical* (1893).

9. Lord Francis Jeffrey (1773-1850), *Jeffrey's Literary Criticism*, ed. D. Nichol Smith (1910); Maurice Morgann (1725-1802), *Morgann's Essay on the Dramatic Character of Sir John Falstaff*, ed. William Arthur Gill (1912).

10. TSE refers in part to John Middleton Murry's use of "life" and "belief in life" as the unifying principles of *The Adelphi* ("The Cause of It All," June 1923); for TSE's initial response, wherein he deplores Murry's "insidious catchword: life," see "The Function of a Literary Review" (446).

11. Clutton-Brock, with whom TSE had often and publicly disagreed since 1916, died after a long intermittent illness on 8 Jan 1924.

12. Jacques Rivière (1866-1925), "La crise du concept de littérature," *NRF*, 11 (1 Feb 1924), 159-70. Rivière describes in favorable terms the downfall of the Romantic concept of literature as an inspired, quasi-religious form. He argues that the idea of literature has been "pénétrée, ou contaminée par l'idée de religion" [penetrated or contaminated by the idea of religion], and concludes that contemporary writers should not subordinate "l'opération littéraire à des fins transcendantes" [literary efforts to transcendental ends] (160, 170).

13. Hariett Shaw Weaver closed the Egoist Press shortly after relinquishing the publishing rights for future editions of *Ulysses* to Sylvia Beach in Paris. Weaver had run the Press with Dora Marsden since 1917 when it published both TSE's *Prufrock and Other Observations* and Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. TSE wrote to her on 2 May, "I want to put into the next *Criterion* a note commemorating the end of the Egoist Press . . . I doubt if you realise yourself how much you have done for English literature"; the end of the Press, he later wrote, "is a public misfortune as well as a strong private regret to me" (*L2* 398, 452). In Sept 1924, at Weaver's urging, TSE moved the *Criterion* into the Egoist's former offices at 2 Robert Street in London and assumed responsibility for the stock of the several titles remaining.

14. When it closed, the Press owned publication rights to Joyce's *Portrait*, *Dubliners*, *Exiles*, and *Chamber Music*. It was also responsible for Lewis's *Tarr* (1918) and *The Caliph's Design* (1919); Moore's *Poems* (1921); Pound's *Dialogues of Fontenelle* (1917) and *Quia Pauper Amavi* (1919); and H. D.'s *Choruses from Iphigeneia in Aulis and the Hippolytus of Euripides* (1919) in the "Poets' Translation Series," and her *Hymen* (1921), among others. TSE admired Aldington's translation series and hoped to continue it under the auspices of the *Criterion* but ultimately did not (*L2* 397).

15. The Hogarth Press, which published TSE's *Poems* (1919) and the first English edition of *The Waste Land* (1923), was run by Leonard and Virginia Woolf. For TSE's reviews of two fine press editions by Francis Meynell's Nonesuch Press, see "John Donne" and "Andrew Marvell" (440, 455).

16. Frederick Etchells (1886-1973), former Vorticist artist and contributor to *Blast*, and Hugh Macdonald (1885-1958) ran Haslewood Books from 1924 to 1931. The first publication was Sir Thomas Browne's *A Letter to a Friend, upon Occasion of the Death of His Intimate Friend* (1924). Etchells sent a copy to TSE in May 1924 and asked whether he would recommend old titles to reprint; TSE called it "a beautiful piece of work" and replied: "It seems to me that wherever possible, it would be more useful to reprint things which are difficult to obtain in any form . . . One or two things of Bolingbroke's for example" (*L2* 415).

17. TSE met Osbert and Sacheverell Sitwell for the first of the Phoenix Society's two performances (1-2 June) of William Congreve's comedy *The Old Bachelor* (1693) (*L2* 432).

18. The Society's prospectus in Sept 1923 had announced a production of Congreve's *The Way of the World* (1700), but the board altered its program upon learning of Nigel Playfair's scheduled production of the play, which enjoyed popular success at the Lyric Theatre from 7 Feb to 25 June 1924. For TSE's reflections on *The Country Wife*, which the Phoenix performed on 17-18 Feb 1924, see his previous "Commentary" (521).

19. For TSE's remarks on Roy Byford's comic role in Congreve's *Love for Love*, and on the lineage of this character type, see "The Romantic Englishman, the Comic Spirit, and the Function of Criticism" (302). In the current production of *The Old Bachelor*, the part of Joseph Wittol was played by Alfred Clark.

20. In his *Histoire de la littérature anglaise* (III.i), Hippolyte Taine calls Restoration dramatist William Wycherley "the coarsest writer who has polluted the stage" and writes that in his work and in Restoration drama more generally, "the special and most extraordinary sign of the times is, that . . . no repellent circumstance is omitted, and that the narrator seems to aim as much at disgusting as at depraving us." *History of English Literature*, trans. H. Van Laun (New York: Henry Holt, 1885), 480, 483.

21. Duncan Yarrow played the King in Marlowe's *Edward II* at the Regent on 18 and 19 Nov 1923.

22. The Phoenix Society's next season featured Ben Jonson's comedy *The Silent Woman*, followed by Restoration plays by John Dryden (*The Assignation; or, Love in a Nunnery*), Thomas Otway (*The Orphan*), and George Villiers (*The Rehearsal*).

An untitled review of *The Growth of Civilization*[1] by W. J. Perry

London: Methuen, 1924. Pp. viii + 224.

The Origin of Magic and Religion, by W. J. Perry

London: Methuen, 1923. Pp. vii + 212.

The Criterion: A Quarterly Review, 2 (July 1924) 489-91

The recent theories of Professor Elliot Smith and his disciple, Mr. W. J. Perry, are of interest and importance to every student or practitioner of the arts, as indeed they should be to everyone who would pay any attention to the history and the future of the human race.[2] In these two volumes Mr. Perry has made a brief statement of two principal theories and several incidental ones. His two main contentions are that the whole of human culture in every part of the earth is a derivation from that of the Egyptians, and that warfare is a comparatively late development due to the activities of certain warlike races clearly distinguished from the productive and artistic races.[3] The warlike races have made no original contributions to culture, and are responsible for the destruction of every ancient civilisation which has disappeared. It is evident that both of these theories are highly contentious, and that no one but a specialist is competent to judge the validity of Mr. Perry's arguments. To an ordinary observer, it appears that these two theories are independent of each other; and that the first theory, that of Egyptian origins, is much better supported than the second. But it may be merely that the first theory is the less revolutionary and therefore finds easier acceptance.

Evidently, Mr. Perry's work is as much sociology as it is anthropology. That is to say, his work is not so much the accumulation and collocation of material, such as is found in *The Golden Bough*, as it is the construction of this material into a single edifice: he may be classified with Durkheim and Lévy-Bruhl rather than with Sir James Frazer.[4] We find his theory of the original spread of mankind and distribution of culture extremely engaging. Prehistoric migrations, according to Mr. Perry, are due to the search for the essential materials of life: in the first instance, flint and its substitutes.

The spread of historic culture is due to the researches of the Egyptian for the materials for their more and more complicated civilisation. The science of irrigation was discovered on the banks of the Nile and introduced elsewhere by the Egyptians, and consecutively by peoples to whom the Egyptians had taught it. By an ingenious presentation of facts, Mr. Perry is able to show that the earliest remains in England are remains of colonies of the Egyptians, or their pupils the Phoenicians. It was one or the other of these peoples who introduced the construction of megalithic monuments into Britain. Similarly, Mr. Perry gives more than plausible reasons for believing that the civilisations of the Pacific and of Central and South America were directly due to nautical expeditions of the Egyptians, or of various peoples who had learnt Egyptian arts and sciences.

Into all of the implications of this fascinating study it is impossible to proceed. But there is one point which has interesting consequences for art. The arts developed incidentally to the search for objects of talismanic properties. The Egyptian who first fashioned gold into a likeness of a cowrie-shell, the Cretan who designed an octopus on his pottery, the Indian who hung a necklace of bear's-teeth about his neck, were not aiming primarily at decoration, but invoking the assistance of life-giving amulets.[5] At what point, we may ask, does the attempt to design and create an object for the sake of beauty become conscious? At what point in civilisation does any conscious distinction between practical or magical utility and aesthetic beauty arise? These questions are not asked or answered by Mr. Perry. But surely the distinction must mark a change in the human mind which is of fundamental importance. And a further question we should be impelled to ask is this: Is it possible and justifiable for art, the creation of beautiful objects and of literature, to persist indefinitely without its primitive purposes: is it possible for the aesthetic object to be a *direct* object of attention? These are only a few of the questions suggested by Mr. Perry's work; which compels more attention, I think, than the work of such abstract philosophers of history as Otto Spengler.[6]

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. Composed between 19 May, when TSE wrote to request Perry's books from Methuen & Co., and 12 June, when he told Virginia Woolf that the issue was complete (*L2* 427; 444). In the effort to increase the *Criterion*'s popular appeal, TSE had recently decided to include more foreign chronicles, regular columns, and book reviews like this one. "I am indeed aware that the

Criterion has been on the dull side," he wrote on 27 Apr 1924 to Lady Rothermere: "We should provide people with more opinions on current literary etc, events" (*L2* 383-84).

2. Australian anthropologist Grafton Elliot Smith, whose work TSE had studied in graduate school, was a proponent of "heliocentric diffusionism," the theory that all human cultures derived from a single culture in ancient Egypt; he taught at University College, London with his principal supporter, the cultural anthropologist William James Perry (1887-1949), who extended Smith's views in *The Megalithic Culture of Indonesia* (1918) and elsewhere. TSE wrote to Smith on 10 Mar to solicit an essay for the *Criterion*: "I cannot tell you how highly we should appreciate the honour of publishing a contribution by you or how much good it would do the *Criterion*" (*L2* 341); his essay "The Glamour of Gold" appeared in the *Criterion* in Apr 1925.

3. Perry follows the conclusions of Smith's *Ancient Egyptians and Their Influence upon the Civilization of Europe* (1911) and expands upon his own previous arguments in *The Children of the Sun: A Study in the Early History of Civilization* (1923) in contending that ancient Egyptian culture was "the source and fount of civilization" (*Growth*, 2). "The earliest civilization was the most advanced in the arts and crafts," he writes in *The Growth of Civilization*, and subsequent generations "were invariably warlike in nature" (128).

4. TSE first distinguished between the comparative anthropological method of Frazer and the sociological theorizing of Durkheim and Lévy-Bruhl in his graduate essay on primitive ritual and in several early book reviews (1.106, 1.420, 1.430). He had recently reiterated the distinction in *NRF* and *Vanity Fair* (489, 513).

5. In accordance with Smith's contention that such objects were valued primarily for their talismanic properties as "Givers of Life," Perry claims: "Jewelry and ornaments generally originated in givers of life" (*Origin*, 15).

6. German philosopher of history Oswald Spengler (1880-1936), author *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* [*The Decline of the West*] (2 vols, 1918-22).

A Commentary[1]

The Criterion: A Quarterly Review, 3 (Oct 1924) 1-5

JOSEPH CONRAD

No periodical which professes a devotion to literature could neglect to associate itself with the general regret at the death of a writer who was beyond question a great novelist, and who possessed the modesty and the conviction which a great writer should have. Conrad's reputation is as secure as that of any writer of his time: critical analysis may adjust, but it will not diminish. He is now a permanent subject for critical study; the article in this number of *The Criterion* by Mr. Shand – which was written and accepted for publication while Conrad was still alive – will in time be followed by others considering various aspects of the novelist's work.[2]

FRANCIS HERBERT BRADLEY

Those who belittle the importance of Oxford in the modern world should hesitate over the names of Arnold, Newman, Pater, and Bradley.[3] None of these writers has had, or could have, the prodigious popularity and apparent influence of the author of *Sartor Resartus*, or the kingdoms of this world which have been conveyed to Mr. H. G. Wells and Mr. Bernard Shaw. They worked in comparative obscurity, or in the deceptive certainty of moderate success. But their intentions were not squandered upon their generation; and, in the gradual dissolution of nineteenth-century ideas and ideals, theirs are amongst the names which carry the most promise of future power.

Francis Herbert Bradley is dead: our contemporaries will no doubt record the fact respectfully, as the death of the last survivor of the academic race of metaphysicians, and will hurry on to the discussion of the latest scientific novelty.[4] It is not for his achievements in his time that I wish to honour Bradley; not even as the man who broke the authority of Mill, or as the man who restored the rank of Britain amongst philosophers.[5] I am engaged with the future. The reserved power of Bradley's philosophy resides perhaps herein: that, with all his apparent debt to Hegel, his philosophy is quite unaffected by the emotional obliquities which render

German metaphysics monstrous. His philosophy is English; but in a different style from that of the brilliant Cambridge school which is in the tradition of Locke and of Hume, of Rousseau and of the French rationalists. Bradley was a scholar and fellow of the reputed college of a great mediaeval scholastic; this is a mere anecdote, but it is true that his philosophy preserves some of the sweetness and light of the mediaeval schoolmen.[6] Who shall say that it does not draw some of its virtue from the genius of the place with which it is associated?

Few will ever take the pains to study the consummate art of Bradley's style, the finest philosophic style in our language, in which acute intellect and passionate feeling preserve a classic balance: only those who will surrender patient years to the understanding of his meaning. But upon these few, both living and unborn, his writings perform that mysterious and complete operation which transmutes not one department of thought only, but the whole intellectual and emotional tone of their being. To them, in the living generation, the news of his death has brought an intimate and private grief.

Shortly before his death Bradley received the Order of Merit: he was one of the very few who could bestow upon that order more distinction than they receive from it. There is, at this moment, one possible successor of whom we could say the same; and that is Sir James George Frazer.[7]

THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION

The Addresses delivered during this summer before the Meetings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, at Toronto, have recently been published.[8] These addresses always form a document of general importance, though an uninstructed reader can hardly be expected to derive much knowledge from so technical a paper as that of Sir W. H. Bragg on Crystal Analysis.[9] And, from the point of view of the same reader, too many of the papers this year deal with applied science instead of universal conclusions. But there are at least two which in spite of repellant titles can excite lively speculation in any intelligent mind: Professor F. W. Gamble's on "Construction and Control in Animal Life" and Sir W. Ashley's on "A Retrospect of Free Trade Doctrine."[10] No doubt, there never was a time more dangerous than now for the humble man of letters to paddle in the tides of science. There are so many volumes of popular science published, there are so many dubious studies calling themselves sciences – in

which one active and impudent imagination is really almost as good as another – it is so easy for anyone to "talk intelligently" – that one must be very wary of making use of scientific generalisations. But Professor Gamble, who begins with the arresting observation that "zoological problems have become problems of control, and that control, from implying mere restraint, has come to mean 'quickening,'" encourages us toward the end by applying his conclusions to human civilisation, in which we feel that we have a right to be interested.[11] Bearing in mind his first statement, we read that "life under dominance (*i.e.* highly developed control) tends to exhaustion, whereas isolation leads to the renewal of activity at a lower level of complexity," and "in so far as isolation leads to greater 'individuation,' we may look to the isolated as the source of fresh individuality and power to wield dominance, to be paid for in time, however, with the inevitable price of diminished progress."[12] We do not know what other zoologists say to this, but it looks as if one distinguished authority thought that a uniform civilisation, in which the same films would be produced in every cinema in the world, was hardly a prospect to be desired.

"YOUTH"

I have received a copy of a periodical, which, like the proceedings of the British Association, is capable of affording both pastime and profit; and I note with regret that this is expected to be the last number.[13] It appears to be the organ of a sect, or of a society, or of a group of sects or societies, which exults in all the activities appropriate to the dawn of a golden age. I fail to find any references to Major Douglas, but there is a great deal about the "Kibbo Kift Kindred"; it has a "clear-cut policy" – that "World Unity" which we have just learned to suspect.[14] The Young Kibbo Kift Kinsman has much to do: for he must not only learn to light a campfire, and make his own Kibbo Kift costume, but must "have a sound general knowledge of comparative religion."[15] And from *Youth* one learns also of the amazing spread of folk-dancing throughout Britain.[16]

So far, this little paper is all that one would expect: it represents apparently an underworld of intellectuals which is perhaps no worse, but certainly no better, than the overworld of letters. Yet there are other things, absent and present, which are not quite what one expects, and are modern. Here and there one notices an absence of that "humanitarian feeling" which Mr. William Archer likes so much.[17] In particular there are two

articles of interest, one by Mr. Ivor Montagu, who is not altogether an admirer of democracy, and an unexpected article by Mr. Cohen-Portheim, not altogether unfavourable, on the Vatican.[18] Even the folk-dancing is slightly modernized; we may not desire that every boy and girl should have a "sound general knowledge of comparative religion," but this folk-dancing seems to be conducted under an influence which I always thought would become very potent – that of Sir James Frazer.[19] And after one has eliminated all the silliness, there remains something which must be recognised. In the most boisterous storm, the ear of the practised sailor can distinguish, and at a surprising distance, the peculiar note of breakers on a reef.[20] This note is not "the great middle-class liberalism," or the great lower-middle-class socialism;[21] it is of authority not democracy, of dogmatism not tolerance, of the extremity and never of the mean.

ST. JOAN

The Kibbo Kift may be what Professor Gamble calls "the renewal of life at a lower level of complexity." The true "dominant" of our time (with "the inevitable price of diminished progress") is Mr. Bernard Shaw.[22] Mr. Shaw stands in fact for "the great middle-class liberalism" (I am not now quoting from Professor Gamble) "as Dr. Newman saw it, and as it really broke the Oxford movement."[23] *St. Joan* has been called his masterpiece. I should be inclined to contest this judgment in favour of *Man and Superman*, but certainly (unless we owe our clairvoyance solely to the lapse of time) *St. Joan* seems to illustrate Mr. Shaw's mind more clearly than anything he has written before.[24] No one can grasp more firmly an idea which he does not maintain, or expound it with more cogency, than Mr. Shaw. He manipulates every idea so brilliantly that he blinds us when we attempt to look for the ideas *with which he works*. And the ideas with which he works, are they more than the residue of the great Victorian labours of Darwin, and Huxley, and Cobden?[25] We must not be deceived by the fact that he scandalised many people of the type to which we say he belongs: he scandalised them, not because his first principles were fundamentally different, but because he was much cleverer, because his thought was more rapid, because he looked farther in the same direction. The animosity which he aroused was the animosity of the dull toward the intelligent. And we cannot forget on the other hand that Mr. Shaw was the intellectual stimulant and the dramatic delight of twenty years which had little enough of either: London owes him a twenty years' debt. Yet his Joan of Arc is perhaps the greatest

sacrilege of all Joans: for instead of the saint or the strumpet of the legends to which he objects, he has turned her into a great middle-class reformer, and her place is a little higher than Mrs. Pankhurst.[26] If Mr. Shaw is an artist, he may contemplate his work with ecstasy.

THE RUSSIAN BALLET

From November 27 the London public is to have the inestimable privilege of a season of the Diaghilev Ballet, and will be able to see again Leonid Massine and Lydia Lopokova, as well as several new acquisitions of the finest ballet in Europe.[27] Let us hope that Sir Oswald Stoll will be able to provide, at the Coliseum, other turns of sufficient liveliness to induce our London audiences to sit through the performance of the greatest mimetic dancer in the world – Massine – to the music of one of the greatest musicians – Stravinski.[28] The writer of these lines recalls his efforts, several years ago, to restrain (with the point of an umbrella) the mirth of his neighbours in a "family house" which seemed united to deride Sokalova at her best in the *Sacre de Printemps*.[29] May we at least tolerate a part of what Paris has appreciated!

CRITES

NOTES

1. Written between 18 Sept, when F. H. Bradley died, and 28 Sept, when TSE mentioned the forthcoming *Criterion* notice of Bradley's death to Harold Joachim (*L2* 496).

2. Conrad died of a heart attack at his home on 3 Aug 1924. "Some Notes on Joseph Conrad" by John Shand (b. 1901) appeared on pages 6-14; TSE had received it by 4 May 1924 (*L2* 410). The next essay on Conrad to appear in the *Criterion* was Shand's review of his *Last Essays* (Oct 1926, 782-85).

3. All Oxford graduates who later returned to the university to teach or write: Arnold was elected Oxford Professor of Poetry in 1857; Newman was a fellow at Oriel College from 1822 to 1845; Pater held a fellowship at Brasenose College, where he published *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*; Bradley was a fellow at Merton college from 1870 until his death.

4. Bradley died of an unknown illness at Acland Nursing Home on 18 Sept at the age of 78. TSE wrote to Bradley's colleague at Oxford, Harold Joachim, on 28 Sept, "I should like to impress Bradley on a different public. I have succeeded in imposing a word about him upon such unlikely organs as *Vanity Fair* and *Vogue*!" He concluded by calling the present essay "very inadequate, as it must be, when there is so much to say, and to so indifferent and so unprepared readers" (*L2* 496).

5. Bradley's philosophical idealism, influenced by the German idealism of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, was opposed to the empiricism and utilitarianism of John Stuart Mill; he argued explicitly against Mill in his first major work, *Ethical Studies* (1876).

6. TSE refers to the popular but disputed claim that medieval scholastic theologian Johannes Duns Scotus was a scholar of Merton College, where Bradley was a fellow from 1870 until his

death. "Sweetness and light" is Arnold's phrase in *Culture and Anarchy* (borrowed from Swift's *Battle of the Books*) for the ideal combination of beauty and wisdom.

7. Bradley was made a member of the Order of Merit on 3 June 1924. "Mr. Bradley is by common consent," the *Times* reported on that day, "the most influential of living English philosophers, and it has been mainly through him that philosophy in England . . . is as vigorous and healthy as it is to-day" (15). Frazer, in fact, became a member on 1 Jan 1925. TSE himself was appointed to the Order in Jan 1948.

8. The British Association for the Advancement of Science was founded in 1831 in order to promote increased public attention to science and to give the field a more unified, systematic direction. The proceedings of the most recent meeting, held in Toronto on 6 Aug 1924, were published as *Report of the Ninety-Second Meeting* (London: Office of the British Association), and postdated 1925 (hereafter *Report*).

9. Physicist William Henry Bragg (1862-1942), "The Analysis of Crystal Structure by X-Rays," *Report*, 34-52.

10. Zoologist Frederick William Gamble (1869-1926), "Construction and Control in Animal Life," *Report*, 109-24; economic historian William James Ashley (1860-1927), "A Retrospect of Free Trade Doctrine," *Report*, 148-77.

11. *Report*, 109.

12. *Report*, 121-22; TSE's parentheses.

13. The magazine *Youth: An International Quarterly of Young Enterprise* was published by St. John's College, Cambridge from 1920 to 1924 and was associated with the International League of Youth, London; the contents page of the present issue addressed the magazine's increasingly severe financial constraints.

14. Engineer Clifford Hugh Douglas (1879-1952) was the founder of Social Credit, a theory of radical economic reform that was criticized for its utopian aspirations to restore balance to society; his *Social Credit* was published in Mar 1924. The Kibbo Kift Kindred was a youth program founded in 1920 as a crafts-based, Native American-themed alternative to the perceived militarism of the Boy Scouts; founder John Hargrave was an ardent supporter of Social Credit. Identifying himself only as "The Tracker," the author writes: "Here is a movement which has a clear-cut policy – World Unity. Every member of this confraternity recognises one common aim – The Federation of Mankind." "The Kibbo Kift Kindred," *Youth*, 2 (Summer 1924), 179.

15. *Youth*, 179.

16. "The English Folk Dance," *Youth*, 194-97. Youth league activist and Kibbo Kift officer Rolf Gardiner discusses the death of Cecil Sharp, founder of the English Folk Dance Society, and the continuing need to expand his influence. "The country dance," he writes, "has got a hold on the people" (195).

17. In *The Old Drama and the New* (1923), William Archer associates "humanitarian feeling" with social progress and betterment, suggesting that the "vulgar" and "puerile" art of the Elizabethans failed in part because it lacked a sufficient understanding of either. Here TSE echoes Archer's statement about Elizabethan drama – "Here and there a certain glimmer of humanitarian feeling is perceptible" (128) – a phrase he also quotes in "Four Elizabethan Dramatists" (511, n. 24).

18. "Prophecies," by film director Ivor Montagu (1904-84), *Youth*, 173-77; "The Policy of the Vatican," by Austrian artist and travel writer Paul Cohen-Portheim (1880-1932), *Youth*, 177-78.

19. Echoing the themes of ritual, seasonal ceremony, and burial rites that are prominent in Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, Rolf Gardiner advocates the creation of a new folk dance based upon "a ritual dance suited to our own age; . . . a dance danced round the blazing camp-fire of the Al-thing of the Kibbo-Kift, in the seasonal festivals of the new and despised heresies, in the ceremonial discipline of camps and in town-pageants and municipal ceremonies, even at the burial of the dead perhaps." *Youth*, 196.

20. TSE used a similar formulation in the drafts of "Death by Water" in *TWL*: "And when the lookout could no longer hear / Above the roar of waves upon the sea / The sharper note of breakers on a reef" (*WLF* 67).

21. "great middle-class liberalism": Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1869), 36.

22. Gamble, "Construction and Control in Animal Life," *Report*, 121-22.

23. Matthew Arnold writes about the opposition faced by John Henry Newman, whose conservative Oxford Movement aimed at reversing the increasing liberalism of the Church of England by restoring traditional ritual and ceremonies, in *Culture and Anarchy*: "But what was it, this liberalism, as Dr. Newman saw it, and as it really broke the Oxford movement? It was the great middle-class liberalism" (36).

24. A correspondent for the *Times* reviewing the New York premiere (28 Dec 1923) of Shaw's *Saint Joan* called it "brilliant and enthralling . . . Many of those present last night characterized the play as Mr. Shaw's greatest achievement" (29 Dec 1923, 8). It subsequently played in London for over 250 performances at the New Theatre from 26 Mar to 25 Oct 1924, with Sybil Thorndike and Lewis Casson in the lead roles. His *Man and Superman: A Comedy and a Philosophy* (1903) premiered in 1905.

25. Richard Cobden (1804-65), liberal politician and free-trade advocate.

26. Emmeline Pankhurst (1858-1928), political activist and leader of the British suffragette movement.

27. Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes returned to London from 24 Nov (the date was officially announced after this issue went to press) until 10 Jan 1925. Neither Léonide Massine, renowned for his choreography of the revived *Rite of Spring* in 1921, nor Lydia Lopokova, who was performing solo in London earlier in the year, danced with the company in the current season. Its opening performances included the *divertissement* ballet *Cimarosiana*, choreographed by Massine, *Le Train bleu* [The Blue Train], written by Jean Cocteau, and the one-act *Les Tentations de la bergère* [The Temptations of the Shepherdess], to which were later added *Aurora's Wedding*, choreographed by Bronislava Nijinska, *Les Sylphides*, music by Chopin, and the Polovtsian dances from *Prince Igor*.

28. Sir Oswald Stoll (1866-1942) was the owner of London's Coliseum Theatre. TSE had attended, early in 1923, Stoll's production at the Royal Opera House of *You'd be Surprised*, which featured music-hall turns as well as the dancing of Massine, Lopokova, and others (435).

29. For TSE's remarks on Lydia Sokolova's performance in the revival of Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps* [The Rite of Spring], which played in Paris in 1920 and which he saw in London on 27 June 1921, see his "London Letter: September, 1921" (369).

Preface[1]

Homage to John Dryden: Three Essays on Poetry of the Seventeenth Century

London: Hogarth Press, 1924. Pp. 46; Preface, 9.

The three essays composing this small book were written several years ago for publication in the *Times Literary Supplement*, to the editor of which I owe the encouragement to write them, and now the permission to reprint them.[2] Inadequate as periodical criticism, they need still more justification in a book. Some apology, therefore, is required.

My intention had been to write a series of papers on the poetry of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: beginning with Chapman and Donne, and ending with Johnson. This forbidden fruit of impossible leisure might have filled two volumes. At best, it would not have pretended to completeness; the subjects would have been restricted by my own ignorance and caprice, but the series would have included Aurelian Townshend and Bishop King, and the authors of *Cooper's Hill* and *The Vanity of Human Wishes*,[3] as well as Swift and Pope. That which dissipation interrupts, the infirmities of age come to terminate. One learns to conduct one's life with greater economy: I have abandoned this design in the pursuit of other policies. I have long felt that the poetry of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, even much of that of inferior inspiration, possesses an elegance and a dignity absent from the popular and pretentious verse of the Romantic Poets and their successors. To have urged this claim persuasively would have led me indirectly into considerations of politics, education, and theology which I no longer care to approach in this way. I hope that these three papers may in spite of and partly because of their defects preserve in cryptogram certain notions which, if expressed directly, would be destined to immediate obloquy, followed by perpetual oblivion.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Plans for this volume, the fourth in the Hogarth Essays series published by Leonard and Virginia Woolf, were under way by May 1924 but did not take definite shape until TSE wrote to

Virginia Woolf on 27 Aug: "When do you want the MSS? I should like at least to provide a short preface, which might take two or three nights' work, and make a few alterations in the text to remove the more patent evidences of periodical publication" (*L2* 483-84). The volume, dedicated "To George Saintsbury," was issued 30 Oct 1924. TSE wrote to Woolf after receiving his author's copies on 12 Nov to "thank you and Leonard for giving my essays those advantages of print and form. . . . The book gives me great pleasure – if I do not read it" (*L2* 537).

2. The essays, published between Mar and Oct 1921, included "John Dryden" (350), which TSE told Woolf he considered the best, "The Metaphysical Poets" (375), and "Andrew Marvell" (309) (*L2* 484); all three were first published in the *TLS* while Bruce Richmond was editor.

3. John Denham and Samuel Johnson, respectively.

A Neglected Aspect of Chapman

TSE delivered this unpublished lecture "A Neglected Aspect of Chapman" at Cambridge University on Saturday, 8 Nov 1924. In a letter of 21 May 1924, James Smith, English literary critic and president of the newly revived Cam Literary Club, invited TSE to speak to the club on "any subject connected with the Elizabethan drama" (*L2* 431). As late as 6 Nov TSE told Richard Aldington that the lecture was "still in very rough shape and I did not want to write it and I don't want to read it and I don't suppose that the Cambridge undergraduates will want to hear it" (*L2* 531). Shortly afterward he wrote to Virginia Woolf that, despite all of his labors, it proved "unworthy of subsequent publication" (*L2* 537). It did, however, dovetail with his creative efforts; on Nov 30 he told Ottoline Morrell, in reference to the recently published "Doris's Dream Songs" (*Chapbook*, Nov 1924): "They are part of a longer sequence which I am doing – I laid down the principles of it in a paper I read at Cambridge, on Chapman, Dostoevski & Dante" (*L2* 546). He still hoped to revise and publish the essay in the *Criterion*; it was announced in a subscription flyer as "An Aspect of George Chapman" for the "next issue" (Apr 1925), where he ascribed its delay "owing to severe illness." He later wrote regretfully in the preface to *Essays on Elizabethan Drama* (1956): "I did not, during that period of my life at which these essays were written, have occasion to write about the work of that very great poet and dramatist, George Chapman. It is too late now: to attempt to repair such a gap, after many years' neglect, would be almost as futile as to attempt to remove the blemishes . . . in one's early poems" (x).

There is a first part to this paper which is still unwritten. This is one chapter in a whole book of Prolegomena to Elizabethan Literature which is still unwritten.[1] My excuse for not having written the book is that there have been a great many other people, better equipped in many ways than I, who have not written it either. This book should be an examination of the sources and of the assumptions – the received ideas or categories – of the Renaissance. There was one man – one of your Cambridge men – who might have written this book, had he not been wiped out by a German Shell – and that was T. E. Hulme.[2]

This paper should have started by an examination of Chapman's sources – the writers who influenced him – a sifting of what he borrowed in order to show you what was indubitably his own. What was merely borrowed from Stoic or other philosophy? What ideas, if any, had he actually lived into and made his own? The Elizabethans are often, individually, praised for

what they borrowed, or for what are mere commonplaces of the time; and their true originality as often, overlooked.

[*appended pencil insertion*:] With Chapman then I must assume that we have examined his considerable learning, and identified his borrowings from Stoic philosophy. I assume that we have set aside all his clichés (not all of them his exclusive property) such as

> Man is a torch borne in the wind; a dream
> But of a shadow, summ'd with all his substance:[3]

> Nothing is made of nought, of all things made,
> Their abstract being a dream but of a shade.[4]

I shall try to present you with a mind which is personal, in that it is not shared with other Elizabethans; and which could not possibly be derived directly from classical or pre-Christian culture; which is the combination of an individual temperament, capable of profound feeling with all the history and influences which were directed upon it at that particular moment of time. I cannot show by orderly steps of exclusion that it is not a classical borrowing, but I hope that you will agree, when you see it, that it is not classical. And I hope you will assist me by not regarding what is vaguely called the Renaissance as an independent epoch, separated from the "middle ages" as the "middle ages" themselves are supposed to be separated from the "classical world." Please clear your minds of any prejudices which may have been planted there by Mr. Middleton Murry or Walter Pater – whose "Renaissance" can be fixed nearer to 1890 than to 1500 A.D.[5]

Chapman's "philosophy" is pretty flimsy stuff, crude and parvenu. [*end pencil insertion*] It is difficult. It is a difficult period. It is difficult to know what the Elizabethans stood for, if for anything, or what they were trying to do. And in Chapman, for one, as in Donne for another, I seem to find an internal incoherence, as of an era of transition and decay. It is to illustrate this lack of unity that I wish to contrast Chapman with the mediaeval – Dante – and with the modern – Dostoevski – with both of whom he has something in common. We will call the period which includes Chapman and Dostoevski the humanist period: and in saying this I have in mind the words of Hulme: "it may be possible that the humanist period we live in may also come to an end, to be followed by a revival of the anti-humanist attitude."[6]

This comparison of these men originated in a resemblance between Chapman and Dostoevski, which struck me several years ago, and which is

the "neglected aspect" of my title. It is found in the two Bussy d'Ambois plays.[7] It may be fanciful. But we are accustomed to accepting – or censoring – uncritically, the inconsistencies in Elizabethan plays: that it may easily have been overlooked.

You remember that in the first Bussy d'Ambois play the downfall of Bussy is compassed largely by the Duke of Guise, and that the motive of the second play was the "revenge" of Bussy by his brother Clermont. The fact is of course that Clermont, so far from carrying out his design on the body of the most important culprit, actually becomes the passionately devoted servant of the Guise. More than this – his devotion has a distinctly mystical tone. When the Guise is dead Clermont exclaims:

> [Guise, O my lord, how shall I cast from me
> The bands and coverts hindering me from thee?
> The garment or the cover of the mind,
> The humane soul is; of the soul, the spirit
> The proper robe is; of the spirit, the blood;
> And of the blood, the body is the shroud.
> With that must I begin then to unclothe,
> And come at th'other.][8]

And there is one very important scene, which is dismissed by such critics as Mr. William Archer as the usual blood and thunder rant, as an attempt at the crudest form of stage pageant without the slightest regard for the plot of the play in which it is introduced.

> [*Music, and the Ghost of* Bussy *enters, leading the Ghost of the* GUISE, Monsieur, Cardinal GUISE, *and* CHATILLON; *they dance about the dead body, and Exeunt*.][9]

then the speech –

> [*Clermont.* How strange is this! The Guise amongst these spirits,
> And his great brother Cardinal, both yet living,
> And that the rest with them, with joy thus celebrate
> This our revenge! This certainly presages
> Some instant death both to the Guise and Cardinal.
> That the Chatillon's ghost too should thus join
> In celebration of this just revenge,
> With Guise, that bore a chief stroke in his death,

It seems that now he doth approve the act,
And these true shadows of the Guise and Cardinal,
Fore-running thus their bodies, may approve
That all things to be done, as here we live,
Are done before all times in th'other life.
That spirits should rise in these times yet are fables;
Though learned'st men hold that our sensive spirits
A little time abide about the graves
Of their deceased bodies; and can take
In cold condensed air the same forms they had,
When they were shut up in this body's shade.][10]

Mr. Archer, repenting this amazing speech, says that Clermont is expressing "mild surprise"![11] Even Swinburne, who is certainly at the opposite pole from Mr. Archer, says that this play is a "singular example of Chapman's passion for paradox."[12] "One chief aim of the author," Swinburne says, "was apparently to reverse all expectations that might be excited by its title." And he proceeds to explain Chapman's reverse as the exercise of the irresponsible activity of a legal mind. Chapman was in Swinburne's opinion a man who delighted in pleading – apparently quite without scruple – any unlikely or untenable cause. He however at least acquits Chapman of clumsiness, and credits him with "direct defiance to all rules and traditions of dramatic effect"!

[*appended holograph insertion:*] But Swinburne is even more positive. He appears to think that the Revenge is a complete reversal of Bussy. The more I read the two plays, the more I am convinced of their consistency. The note of Stoical (and more than Stoical, in my opinion) resignation is clear from the beginning.

[*Bussy*. I must farewell, however: though I die,
My death consenting with his augury;
Should not my powers obey when she commands,
My motion must be rebel to my will:
My will to life: if, when I have obey'd,
Her hand should so reward me, they must arm it,
Bind me or force it: or, I lay my life,
She would rather convert it many times
On her own bosom, even to many deaths;
But were there danger of such violence,

I know 'tis far from her intent to send:
And who she should send is as far from thought,
Since he is dead, whose only mean she used.][13]

[*Bussy*. . . . Prop me, true sword, as thou has ever done:
The equal thought I bear of life and death
Shall make me faint on no side; I am up;
Here like a Roman statue I will stand
Till death hath made me marble: oh, my fame,
Live in despite of murder; take thy wings
And haste thee where the grey-eyed morn perfumes
Her rosy chariot with Sabean spices,
Fly, where the evening from th'Iberian vales,
Takes on her swarthy shoulders Hecate,
Crown'd with a grove of oaks: fly where men feel
The cunning axletree: and those that suffer
Beneath the chariot of the snowy Bear:
And tell them all that D'Ambois now is hasting
To the eternal dwellers; that a thunder
Of all their sighs together (for their frailties
Beheld in me) may quit my worthless fall
With a fit volley for my funeral.][14]

I get almost equally the impression from the earlier as from the later play, that more or less consciously the personages are acting, and accepting, inevitable roles in this world, and that the real centre of their action is in another Kingdom. And I have a similar feeling from the House of the Seven Gables, and The Wings of the Dove, and especially the Brothers Karamazoff.[15] [*end insertion*]

Readers of Dostoevski will remember the difficulty they had at first in understanding the motives and actions of the characters. They find very soon that a mere charge of irrationality will not do; that there is a true consistency of which one is convinced even without understanding it. I hardly need to give instances: in the behaviour even of minor characters, who would hardly seem important enough to behave irrationally, one finds this peculiarity. (In the Karamazoff, for instance, there is a scene where Dmitri drives out madly with a party in the night to a distant inn where the party carouse with a couple of quite irrelevant Poles).[16] What one gradually comes to be aware of is that in Dostoevski's novels there are everywhere

two planes of reality, and that the scene before our eyes is only the screen and veil of another action which is taking place behind it. The characters themselves are partially aware of this division, aware of the grotesque futility of their visible lives, and seem always to be listening for other voices and to be conducting a conversation with spectres. Hence their distraction, their inability to attend to the business at hand in a practical way.

A good deal has been made of the connexion of Dostoevski with psychoanalysis, and I dare say that you know more of the literature of this subject than I do. And I do not want to adventure into a scientific field in which I have no competence, and which is already overrun by amateurs. Psychology is a legitimate field of investigation, but its shortcomings always seem to me to have been most manifest when it has been applied to literature. I will only touch upon one dilemma. Either the author is in some sense a psychoanalyst himself, in which case the work of criticism is merely to interpret the author's analysis of his characters, or he is not: in which case the author himself is the subject of analysis. Now I have no objection to the psychologist finding if he can, an explanation in his own terms of the mind of Dostoevski or of the mind of Chapman. [*holograph insertion*:] But I question the legitimacy of applying psychology to a fictitious character: apply it to the author if you like, but not to his world – once you are in it. [*end insertion*] I only refer to psychology at all in order to point out my belief that it has nothing to do with my question, which is this: what is the meaning of this world of Dostoevski and Chapman, this inexplicable behaviour, this Reconciliation motive? What is the similarity between the behaviour of Clermont toward the Guise, and the behaviour of Prince Muishkine when he lies down beside his old antagonist, and strokes his head, while the woman with whom they were both so occupied lies dead near by?[17] Cannot literary history throw some light on it? [*appended holograph insertion:*] Psychology is a half way science justified, if at all, by its therapeutic value. It must lead you in the end, either to glands or to theology – both of which are clear and distinct ideas. But it must in any case, admit the existence of other worlds of discourse than its own: and I am at the moment in one of these other worlds. I speak of psychology only because Dostoevski seems to appeal to the psychological mind, but I am dealing with him from this point of view. [*end insertion*]

Let me digress for a moment to some other poets of the period of Chapman. One characteristic which makes Donne so piquant to the present generation is a peculiar mystical sensuality, which is really similar to the

sense of a double world of a Chapman. The reasons for Donne's present popularity, and the minor vogue of certain poets like Lord Herbert who have some of the same quality – are not difficult to find: they are similar to the reasons which make Dostoevski so popular amongst the more hysterical Teutonic nation. It represents a nostalgia for spiritual life amongst peoples deadened by centuries of more and more liberal protestantism. But what is this spiritual sensuality, as found in the 17th century? It is in fact a symptom of Dissolution of Christianity in protestant Europe, of the relaxing of the Christian system of the various needs of man.

A disorder like this must be referred to some order in decay. Examine the theory of love in Donne – it is not a theory at all, it is merely an honest statement of a problem and a paradox. But it is a problem which would never have existed but for Christianity, and Christianity found its own solution – but left the problem after the solution had been lost. It is curious that Christianity should thus have made problems, solved them, disappeared, and left the problems.

I am now thinking of course of Dante and his contemporaries. Dante is a poet not very much read, and what is read is chiefly the Inferno. To judge Dante by the Inferno, is as if to judge Dostoevski after the first third of the Brothers Karamazoff: and the Paradiso is the most important of all. No one who reads Dante and his contemporaries attentively – and also I believe his Provençal predecessors – but here I am wholly ignorant – and also (incidentally) some of the Spanish mystics – here I am only partially competent – can doubt that they had arrived at a theory of love and sex which was comprehensive and which worked. I do not say that it is possible at the present moment: since a Coalition Government beneficently added innumerable female votes to the roll,[18] and with ladies' colleges almost in earshot[19†] – it is difficult for us to understand the Mystery of the Adoration of the Blessed Virgin. My point is that Chapman and Dostoevski and ourselves are all part of a modern world and that Dante belonged to another and perhaps a wiser one.

For Dante knew as well as Chapman and Dostoevski that man belongs to two worlds: that the human life when it is human, is a compromise and a conflict. It is an error to regard Dante's conception of love as romantic. Dante was a practical Latin, and being a practical Latin was therefore more spiritual than the Northerner. You are not to conceive of me in this context as the apologist of Christianity or the champion of obscurantism. That is another story. But I do say that if you accept Christian problems then you

should accept Christian conclusions. When I find a writer for whom clearly the Christian other world does not exist, or who has found another "other world," then I will not judge him by Christian standards. But I say that Chapman and Donne and Dostoevski, and also James Joyce, accept Christian problems; they are operating with Christian categories; and that they are all inferior to Dante because they do not draw Christian conclusions. This is I think the great distress of the modern world, that it is neither Christian nor definitely something else.

I should like – and it is really called for to support my remarks on Dante – to proceed by tracing his creation of Beatrice from the Vita Nuova ~~and the Convivio~~ through the Paradiso. I should like to show how deliberately and consciously, with what knowledge of his own needs and limitations he created this figure as a solution of his physical and spiritual needs. [*appended holograph insertion:*] But I must content myself with a few assertions. I am not making any statements about the truth or falsity of Dante's philosophy. I will say only that it was more sophisticated and more comprehensive than that of Chapman and Dostoevski. He knew, better than they, what he felt, because he had a category for every feeling. Hence he is, even in the most restricted sense, a consummate technician, having standards of precision. [*end insertion*]

> Trasumanar significar per verba
> non si poria; però l'esemplo basti
> a cui esperienza grazia serba.[20]

[*appended holograph insertion*]: I know that the Elizabethan literature is usually regarded as a golden age, instead of an age of decomposition; and my friend Hermann Hesse, for whose book on Dostoevski Blick ins Chaos I have a great admiration, though I do not agree with his conclusions, regards Dostoevski as the prophet of a new religion.[21] But I must consider Chapman, and Donne and Dostoevski simply as struggling, and vainly, against that movement which culminated in Goethe – the movement which accepted the divorce of human and divine, denied the divine, and asserted the perfection of the human to be the divine. On the contrary, the perfection of the human is Mr. George Bernard Shaw. The recognition (recognition – facing unpleasant facts) that neither human nor divine will be denied, that they are inseparable and eternally in conflict, this recognition of duality is the Doctrine of Original Sin.[22] [*end insertion*]

It may strike you that I have said very little about Chapman, and that he has been merely a pretext. What I wanted to do, primarily, was to exhibit Chapman as a representative Elizabethan, in a new light. As the representative of a period which was the beginning of a decay.

On the one hand, Chapman is not quite the incompetent bungler that Mr. Archer supposes: he had purposes beyond Mr. Archer's comprehension. On the other hand, like the other Elizabethans, he represents not rebirth but decomposition. And of this decomposition Dostoevski is a further stage: they both saw the need, but were unable to realise τὸν κατὰ τὸν νοῦν βιόν.[23]

NOTES

1. TSE outlined his plan to study Webster, Tourneur, Middleton, and Chapman in relation to the criticism of Lamb, Coleridge, Swinburne, and William Archer in "Four Elizabethan Dramatists" (503). His intention now was to publish the essays in successive issues of the *Criterion*, and this was the first essay attempted.

2. Hulme went up to St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1902, but he was sent down in 1904. He returned to Cambridge for a few months in 1912; a letter from Bergson supported his reinstatement, but he never reenrolled. TSE had recently discussed Hulme's posthumous *Speculations* (1924) in the *Criterion* (521).

3. *Bussy D'Ambois* I.i.18-19; TSE quotes from his Mermaid edition, *George Chapman*, ed. William Lyon Phelps (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1895), 128; both lines are marked in the margin of his edition.

4. *Bussy D'Ambois* V.i.86-87; both lines are marked in the margin of his edition (216).

5. TSE alludes to John Middleton Murry's characterization of the Renaissance in "Romanticism and the Tradition" (*Criterion*, Apr 1924), the most recent essay in their ongoing public debate over Classicism and Romanticism: "the essential fact of the Renaissance was that man asserted his independence of an external spiritual authority. . . . Men, who had long been silently chafing against the restraints of an established and omnipotent religion that had lost contact with the individual soul, gained confidence in their own impulses" (281). Walter Pater published the final, fourth edition of *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry* in 1893.

6. "Humanism and the Religious Attitude," *Speculations* (London: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1924), 54-55; TSE's emphasis.

7. Chapman's *Bussy D'Ambois* was first published in 1607, its sequel *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois* in 1613.

8. *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois* V.i.168-75. In the typescript, TSE gives only the page number (315) for the passage that he intended to quote in the lecture; the lines, here editorially supplied, are marked in the margin of his edition.

9. *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois* V.i. In the typescript, Eliot gives only "Music etc." (313) to indicate the stage direction that he intended to quote in the lecture; the full passage is here editorially supplied.

10. *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois* V.i.120-38. In the typescript, TSE gives only the page numbers (313-14) for the passage that he intended to quote in the lecture; the lines are here editorially supplied.

11. William Archer refers to the play as "a model of impotence in construction" in *The Old Drama and the New* (1923) and remarks: "Clermont d'Ambois, who does not know that Guise and the Cardinal have been murdered, expresses mild surprise on seeing them among the ghosts; but spectres are so common at the Court of France (as Chapman sees it) that no one turns a hair on encountering them" (88-89). A copy of Archer's book is in TSE's library.

12. *George Chapman: A Critical Essay* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1875), 101; TSE's two subsequent quotations are from pages 102 and 105-06, respectively.

13. *Bussy D'Ambois* V.i.70-82, spoken in soliloquy after Bussy is warned by a spirit that if he yields to the summons of his mistress Tamyra, she will kill him: "y'are fair-warned: farewell!" In the typescript, TSE gives only the page number (211) for the passage that he intended to quote in the lecture; the lines are here editorially supplied.

14. *Bussy D'Ambois* V.i.94-111 (216-17), spoken by Bussy as Tamyra offers to help him. In the typescript, TSE gives only the page numbers (217) for the passage that he intended to quote in the lecture; the lines are here editorially supplied. Lines 96-98 (beginning, "Shall make me faint . . .") and 102-06 (beginning, "Fly, where the evening. . .") of the above passage are marked in the margin of his edition, the latter with a note in TSE's hand: "Hercules Furens."

15. TSE discussed the "personal kinship" between Hawthorne (*The House of the Seven Gables*, 1851) and James (*The Wings of the Dove*, 1902) in "The Hawthorne Aspect" (1.736). He compared the visions of James and Dostoevsky in his "Lettre d'Angleterre" for the *NRF* (Nov 1923), the English version of which appeared in *Vanity Fair* (Feb 1924) as "A Prediction in Regard to Three English Authors" (513).

16. In Part III, Book viii, Dmitri Karamazov, fearful that he has killed his father's old servant Grigory and lost his beloved Grushenka, flees in a blood-stained and suicidal state to Plastunov's inn in the village of Mokroye to see her one more time. Among her companions, there are two sycophantic Poles, Pan Mussyalovitch, Grushenka's erstwhile lover who continues to wheedle money from her, and Pan Vrublevsky, his older accomplice. In the card game and drunken party that ensues, the cheating and conniving Poles are exposed and locked out by Dmitri, whereupon Grushenka professes her true love for him.

17. In Dostoevesky's *The Idiot*, Book iv, Prince Mishkin (the idiot) wipes the feverish head of his friend and antagonist Parfyon Rogozhin, who had just stabbed Mishkin's fiancée, Nastasya Fillipnova, when he realized that he could never possess her. Introduced to Dostoyevsky's work by Alain-Fournier in Paris in 1910-11, TSE read *The Idiot* in French translation (1887) by Victor Derély and continued to use his French spelling of Muichkine as "Muishkine," writing to Hermann Hesse on 13 March 1922 about the "Muishkine" section of *Blick ins Chaos* (*L1* 645).

18. The Coalition Government (1916-22) of Prime Minister David Lloyd George had passed the Representation of the People Act in Feb 1918, giving universal suffrage to men age 21 and limited suffrage to women age 30, lowered to age 21 for women in 1928.

19†. In the typescript, TSE here crossed out "Newnham and Girton" and inserted by hand "ladies' colleges." The two Cambridge colleges for women, Girton College, founded in 1869, and Newnham College, founded in 1871.

20. *Paradiso* I.70-73. *Trans*: "To pass beyond humanity may not be told in words, wherefore let the example satisfy him for whom grace reserveth the experience" (*DC3* 6-7). *Read*: "significar *per verba*." The typescript contains three words mistyped: "pona" for "poria," "pero" without accent, and "suba" corrected to "serba" in TSE's hand. TSE later quoted these lines in "Dante" (1929) (*SE* 265).

21. TSE discovered *Blick ins Chaos: Drei Aufsätze* [*In Sight of Chaos: Three Essays*] (Bern: Verlag Seldwyla, 1921) by the German poet and novelist Hermann Hesse (1877-1962) in Dec 1921 in Bern while staying in nearby Lausanne. He was composing *TWL* at the time, and in the notes to Part V, ll. 367-77 (beginning "What is that sound high in the air"), he later quoted a passage from the last paragraph of Hesse's opening chapter "Die Brüder Karamasoff oder Der Untergang Europas" ["The Brothers Karamazov – the Downfall of Europe"] (20). TSE's copy of *Blick ins Chaos* (King's) is signed "T. S. Eliot Berne Dec. 1921" and includes a note by John Hayward: "This is the copy used by T. S. Eliot and from which he quoted in *The Waste Land*." TSE wrote to Hesse about the book on 13 Mar 1922, expressing his admiration and wishing that he had space to include it in the *Criterion*. Two months later he visited Hesse in Montagnola, Switzerland, and persuaded him to write an essay on "Recent German Poetry" for the first issue. Sydney Schiff, whom TSE directed to *Blick ins Chaos*, soon prepared an English translation, publishing it under his pseudonym Stephen Hudson as *In Sight of Chaos* (Zurich: Verlag Seldwyla, 1923). In a letter of 1 Oct 1923, TSE identified the tension between the orientalism of Hesse's book and the Aristotelian philosophy of the *Criterion*; referring to "my friend Hermann Hesse for whose talent I have great respect," he wrote: "I have been tempted to write a denunciation of his book . . . and of the author whom he so highly praises Dostoevsky" (*L2* 230).

Hesse refers to Dostoevsky as "dieser russische Prophet" [this Russian prophet] and discusses his unconscious foreshadowing of Europe's descent into chaos in the final paragraphs of the first chapter of *Blick ins Chaos* (16).

22. TSE draws upon Hulme's contrast, throughout *Speculations*, between the humanist and religious attitudes, particularly the absolute religious and ethical values which enable those who hold the religious attitude to realize the doctrine of Original Sin (46-49).

23. *Trans*: life in accordance with the mind. TSE changes Aristotle's phrase from the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1178a7), "ὁ κατὰ τὸν νοῦν βίος," from the nominative to the accusative case to fit the syntax of his English sentence. *The Ethics of Aristotle*, ed. John Burnet (London: Methuen, 1900), 464. Holograph insertion.

TEXTUAL NOTE

Location: Private collection: the eight-page typescript was typed from a handwritten manuscript by an unknown typist who left spaces for names and words that she could not decipher, which TSE then inserted by hand in black ink; white foolscap, 20.4 x 33.8 cm, no watermark; bright blue typing ribbon; holograph ink emendations; six separate, smaller pages of holograph insertions in pencil, pinned to pages 1 (two insertions), 3, 5, 7, 8. Occasional abbreviations (Bros., Govt., Dost.) have been expanded. TSE's underlinings have been preserved throughout.

A Brief Introduction to the Method of Paul Valéry[1]

Le Serpent, par Paul Valéry. With a Translation into English by Mark Wardle and an Introduction by T. S. Eliot

London: R. Cobden-Sanderson, 1924. Pp. 51; Introduction, 7-15.

We are so accustomed, in considering contemporary English poetry, to identify tradition with lack of invention, and on the other hand originality with oddity; our poetry is of such various and incompatible inheritances – English, Irish, and American – that it is impossible for us to point to the work of any one poet as representing our time, or even as representing one living generation. If we assign the place of honour to Mr. Yeats – and there is certainly none other whose accomplishment and influence entitle him to that position – we must qualify our respect by the admission that an Irish poet can only be accepted with qualifications, by English disciples. It is difficult for us, naturally wasteful, to understand the economy of French literature; to understand that the unity and uniformity of the French mind is such that what appear traditional or revolutionary are only movements within one tradition; and that therefore one poet can be approved by all parties, as uniting the innovations made by an adventurous generation with the traditional merits of French classical poetry. Undoubtedly, Valéry does not represent the most "advanced" experimentation of French verse: that experimentation will be reintegrated into the tradition by a later generation: what Valéry represents, and for which he is honoured and admired by even the youngest in France, is the reintegration of the symbolist movement into the great tradition.

Valéry is the heir, so to speak, of the experimental work of the last generation: he is its completion and its explanation. And in saying this, I am not derogating to the extent of one syllable from his originality: those who have worked in verse know that poetry like that of Paul Valéry is as original and as necessary as any other.[2] We must not be deceived by the fact that Valéry never writes in *vers libres*. *Vers libre* was only a part of the symbolist movement; it is not the essential innovation of even such skilful inventors as Jules Laforgue and Gustave Kahn.[3] Valéry takes over, and develops, the music, the fluidity, even many of the technical turns of symbolism; his idiom is frequently suggestive of it, and is never a repudiation of it.

Où sont nos amoureuses?
Elles sont aux tombeaux . . .[4]

O saisons! O châteaux! . . .[5]

may be compared with any part of Valéry's beautiful "Cantique des Colonnes":

Servantes sans genoux,
Sourires sans figures,
La belle devant nous
Se sent les jambes pures.

Pieusement pareilles,
Le nez sous le bandeau
Et nos riches oreilles
Sourdes au blanc fardeau . . .[6]

The indefinable difference is the difference between the fluid and the static: between that which is moving toward an end and that which knows its end and has reached it; which can afford to stand, changeless, like a statue. There are two considerations about *order*. One is the amount of material organised, and the degree of difficulty of that material; the other is the completeness of the organisation. Rimbaud, for instance, may have had the vision of a larger organisation than Valéry's: but it is not so achieved. And in comparison with such poets as Stuart Merrill, there is no question: Valéry is their justification.[7]

To Rimbaud, to Verlaine, and to Gérard de Nerval, the relationship in the "Cantique des Colonnes" is evident. Valéry's kinship with Mallarmé is too evident to need mention – in particular it is manifest in "Les Grenades" and in an early draft of "Narcisse."[8] There is also (and not merely through Mallarmé) a kinship with Baudelaire:

Où sont des morts les phrases familières,
L'art personnel, les âmes singulières?
La larve file où se formaient les pleurs.[9]

There are other lines in *Le Cimetière Marin* – to my mind one of Valéry's finest poems – which arouse other associations:

Où tant de marbre est tremblant sur tant d'ombres . . .

Chanterez-vous quand serez vaporeuse? . . .

Entre le vide et l'événement pur . . .[10]

(the last which suggests so strongly though accidentally Brutus's

> Between the acting of a dreadful thing
> And the first motion, all the interim is
> Like a phantasma or a hideous dream).[11]

> Beau ciel par qui mes jours sont troubles ou sont calmes,
> Seule terre où je prends mes cyprès et mes palmes . . .[12]

> Tu menois le blond Hyménée,
> Qui devoit solennellement
> De ce fatal accouplement
> Célébrer l'heureuse journée . . .[13]

These two quotations are from Malherbe, but they remind me of Valéry. One of the qualities of a genuine poet – and I have tested this in English poetry, though in reading English poetry we are most likely to forget the fact – is that in reading him we are reminded of remote predecessors, and in reading his remote predecessors we are reminded of him.

More substantially than Moréas – that gallant and uneasy metic[14] – Valéry has come naturally and by his proper impulse toward classicism: toward an individual and *new* organisation of many poetic elements. And at the same time he is a continuator of the experiment, the enquiry, pursued by Mallarmé. As M. Thibaudet rightly says:

> Tout Mallarmé consiste en ceci: une expérience désintéressée sur des confins de la poésie, à une limite où l'air respirable manquerait à d'autres poitrines. Valéry a pris conscience de cette expérience, l'a contrôlée, en a tenté la théorie, a contribué pour sa part à lui donner un commencement d'institution.[15*]

To English amateurs, rather inclined to dismiss poetry which appears reticent, and to peer lasciviously between the lines for biographical confession, such an activity may seem no other than a *jeu de quilles*.[16] But Boileau was a fine poet, and he spoke in seriousness.[17] To reduce one's disorderly and mostly silly personality to the gravity of a *jeu de quilles* would be to do an excellent thing: yet for this a great poet, Landor, has been condemned to obloquy.[18] And we forget that Browning, and Shelley, and Byron, for all their effervescence, give us less of themselves than does Turgenev or Flaubert. And perhaps the reticence of Villon is no less than that of Valéry. One is prepared for art when one has ceased to be interested in one's own

emotions and experiences except as material; and when one has reached this point of indifference one will pick and choose according to very different principles from the principles of those people who are still excited by their own feelings and passionately enthusiastic over their own passions. And observe that, as M. Thibaudet well says, Valéry's interest in "technique" is something much more comprehensive than an interest in the skilful disposition of words for their own sake: it is a recognition of the truth that not our feelings, but the pattern which we may make of our feelings, is the centre of value.[19]

It is a further error to conceive of Valéry as an "intellectual" poet, in contrast to poets of emotion and vivid depiction of life. Poetry, the product, is neither more nor less intellectual; but it is written by men some of whom are more intellectual and some less – they may write equally good poetry. I may exaggerate; but it seems to me that M. Thibaudet, for one – and there are other critics too – makes too much play – at any rate, more than is good for Anglo-Saxon readers – with the question of Valéry's "metaphysics."[20] A poet who is also a metaphysician, and unites the two activities, is conceivable as an unicorn or a wyvern is conceivable: he is possible like some of Meinong's *Annahmen*; but such a poet would be a monster, just as (in my opinion) M. Valéry's Monsieur Teste is a monster.[21] Such a poet would be two men. It is more convenient to use, if necessary, the philosophy of other men, than to burden oneself with the philosophy of a monstrous brother in one's own bosom. Dante and Lucretius used other men's philosophies cheerfully without bothering too much about verifying them for themselves. But as to Valéry, if he has a philosophy, that is to say a metaphysical system over and above his poetical system of organisation, then I do not know what that system is. In "La Pythie" I find, not a philosophy, but a poetic statement of a definite and unique state of the soul dispossessed.[22] In *Le Serpent* I do not find a philosophy, but a poem which has existing parallels and which will probably have more: a theme as old as the Upanishads and perpetually new: the Red Slayer and *la plaie et le couteau*.[23] But this theme has never before, and will never again, have *this* expression; the magnificence of the ending – the first version, given alternatively in our text, I prefer to the second – will never be repeated.

> . . . éternellement,
> Éternellement le bout mordre.[24]

Like all of Valéry's poetry, it is impersonal in the sense that personal emotion, personal experience, is extended and completed in something impersonal – not in the sense of something divorced from personal experience and passion. No good poetry is the latter; indeed, the virtue, the marvel of Lucretius is the passionate act by which he annihilates himself in a system and unites himself with it, gaining something greater than himself. Such a surrender requires great concentration. But to those who like to preserve themselves in their limited "personalities," and to have the emotions and notions of these petty personalities flattered by constant repetition rather than extended and transformed by the poet's superior organisation, neither Lucretius nor Valéry, nor any other excellent poet, can ever be really acceptable and comprehensible.

I hope that the present edition of *Le Serpent* may serve to make better known in this country the poetry of M. Valéry. His influence, so great in France, might be great and valuable here. The best stimulus to influence is good translation; the Elizabethan age, as we must not tire of reminding ourselves, was the age in England which produced the most numerous and the most living translations. To translate a poet like Valéry, even into tolerable prose, is extremely difficult: Captain Wardle has succeeded – and *success* in a translation is no vague commendation – in a task which I should have considered impossible.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Published Dec 1924; drafted between 4 and 11 Oct 1923 (*L2* 250). Mark Kingsley Wardle (1888-1977) wrote to TSE in Aug 1922 about the potential publication of his translation of Valéry's *Le Serpent*, which was first published under the title "Ébauche d'un serpent" [Sketch of a Serpent] in the *NRF* (July 1921, 5-17) and later revised in his *Charmes ou Poèmes* (1922). The translation appeared in the *Criterion* in Apr 1923 (267-76). TSE also sent it to Virginia Woolf in the hopes that the Hogarth Press would publish a bilingual edition with, according to Valéry's request, "an introduction by some English writer" (*L2* 28). When the Woolfs declined, TSE wrote to Wardle: "I can now tell you that Lady Rothermere is very anxious to publish it and will have it published for the *Criterion* by Cobden-Sanderson, as the first of a projected series of publications by contributors to the review" (*L2* 153). TSE postponed publication for commercial reasons and continued to work on his introduction, finally writing to Wardle on 11 Nov 1924: "the Valéry book is well on the way to publication. I have only released my introduction after holding it up for a year because I despaired of doing anything better, but do not suppose that I am pleased with it" (*L2* 535).

2. In his comments on a draft of this essay in Oct 1923, Wardle asked if "the appearance of so many of Valéry's kinsmen from the vasty deeps does not leave a taste of derivation that needs a brief gargle to remove it?" (*L2* 250).

3. French editor and poet Gustave Kahn (1859-1936), self-proclaimed inventor of *vers libre* and one of its early theoretical proponents.

4. *Trans*: Where are our lovers? They are in the grave . . . ; *read:* "au tombeau!" Gérard de Nerval, "Les Cydalises" (1853).

5. *Trans*: Oh seasons! Oh castles! *read*: "Ô saisons, ô châteaux." Athur Rimbaud, "Ô saisons, ô châteaux" (1886).

6. *Trans*: "Servants unbending, / Smiles with no faces, / Beauty before us / Feels her limbs pure. // Devoutly of a kind, / Nose hid by the bandeau, / And our rich ears / Deaf to the white load." "Cantique des colonnes" [Song of the Columns], originally in *Charmes*. Trans. David Paul, *Poems* (Princeton UP: 1971), 125.

7. American-born poet Stuart Merrill wrote mostly in French and lived in Paris, where he also published translations of the French symbolists in *Pastels in Prose* (1890); TSE credited Merrill's book with introducing the English reader to the genre of the "Prose-Poem" (1.537).

8. TSE refers to Valéry's "Les Grenades" [Pomegranates] from *Charmes* and "Narcisse parle" [Narcissus Speaks] from *Album de vers anciens* (1920), the predecessor of "Fragments du Narcisse" [Fragments of Narcissus], from *Charmes*.

9. *Trans*: Where now are the singular souls of the dead, / Their personal ways, the tricks of speech they had? / The worm channels its way where tears formed." Trans. David Paul, *Poems*, 219; Valéry's elegiac long poem *Le Cimetière marin* [The Graveyard by the Sea] was published separately in 1920 and again in *Charmes* in 1922.

10. *Trans*: "Where so much marble quivers on so many shadows"; "Will you sing, when you are vaporous?"; "Between emptiness and the pure event." Trans. David Paul, *Poems*, 215-19. All from *Le Cimetière marin*.

11. Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar* II.i.63-65. TSE echoes this passage in "The Hollow Men," "Between the idea / And the reality / Between the motion / And the act / Falls the Shadow" (*CPP* 58).

12. *Trans*: Beautiful sky, by which my days are made stormy or calm, / Solitary earth where I take my cypresses and my palms. François de Malherbe (1555-1628), "Stances pour M. le duc de Montpensier" (1603).

13. *Trans*: You led the blond Hymenee / Who had to solemnly / In this fatal pairing, / celebrate the joyous day. François de Malherbe, "Ode à M. le duc de Bellegarde, grand écuyer de France" (1608), stanza 13.

14. Greek-born French poet Jean Moréas (Johannes Papadiamantopoulos, 1856-1910) was an early leader of the French Symbolist movement who later repudiated it and founded the École Romane, a group dedicated to the revival of classical Hellenic forms and applauded for its French nationalism by conservatives like Charles Maurras.

15. *Trans*: All of Mallarmé consists in this: a disinterested experience on the edges of poetry, at the outer limits where others would not be able to breathe the air. Valéry became aware of this experience, controlled it, attempted a theory of it, and contributed, for his part, to giving it an institutional beginning.

*TSE's note: "Albert Thibaudet: Paul Valéry. *Les cahiers verts*: Grasset, 1923" (16-17). Thibaudet's study was published in Paris by Bernard Grasset as no. 25 in the series *Les Cahiers verts*, edited by Daniel Halévy.

16. *jeu de quilles*: a game of bowling, ninepins.

17. Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux reportedly boasted about his talents: "Il faut avouer . . . que j'ai deux grand talents, aussi utiles l'un que l'autre à la société et à un État: l'un de bien jouer aux quilles, l'autre de bien faire des vers" [It must be confessed . . . that I have two great talents, which are equally useful in matters of society and of the State: one, I bowl well, the other, I write poetry well.] Louis Racine, *Mémoires sur la vie de Jean Racine* (1747) in *Œuvres de Jean Racine* (Paris: Laplace, 1882), 62.

18. TSE may refer to a parody of Walter Savage Landor's fictional dialogues in *Blackwood's Magazine* (Apr 1843), "Imaginary Conversation, between Mr. Walter Savage Landor and the Editor of *Blackwood's Magazine*," in which the fictional editor admits to Landor: "I am almost afraid to trust you, sir. You treat the Muses like nine-pins" (519).

19. Shortly after the passage that TSE quotes above, Thibaudet suggests that technique, for Valéry, is always a means rather than an end: "Rien ne se crée que par une technique, et toute technique mobilise, utilise, aménage patience et travail, précision et prévision" (18) [Nothing is created by a technique alone; every technique mobilizes, uses, develops patience and work, precision and anticipation].

20. Thibaudet discusses Valéry as a philosopher, "le Valéry métaphysicien" (15), at length, discerning the influence of Leibniz and Descartes, the metaphysics of Schopenhauer and Bergson, and concluding: "Valéry et M. Bergson, tout en s'ignorant réciproquement, paraissent exprimer en deux langages une intuition analogue" [Valéry and Bergson, although each in mutual ignorance of the other, appear to express a similar intuition in two different languages] (23).

21. Austrian philosopher Alexius Meinong develops the concept of the *Annahme* – an intellectual assumption or supposal which cannot be challenged on evidential grounds – in *Über Annahmen* [On Assumptions] (1902), a text upon which TSE drew in the fourth and fifth chapters of his dissertation (1.307, 1.332). Valéry first wrote of Monsieur Teste – his parodic alter-ego who devotes himself entirely to an intellectual life – in "La Soirée avec M. Teste" (1896); it appeared in book form in 1919 and was followed by a number of other installments, published together as a "cycle" in *M. Teste* (1926).

22. Valéry's "La Pythie" [The Prophetess], in *Charmes*.

23. TSE's first reference is likely to the *Bhagavad-Gitā* (which is not itself an Upanishad but often given Upanishadic status), ix.16: "The sacrifice am I, the offering am I, the Fathers' oblation am I, the herb am I, the spell am I, the butter-libation am I, the fire am I, the rite of oblation am I." *Bhagavad-Gitā; or, The Lord's Song*, trans. Lionel Barnett (London: Dent, 1905), 128. TSE owned this Temple Classics edition, which is inscribed: "T. S. Eliot Cambridge 1912" (Houghton).

The "Red Slayer" appears in the first line of Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Brahma" (1857) – "If the red slayer think he slays, / Or if the slain think he is slain / They know not well the subtle ways / I keep" – which continues, "I am the doubter and the doubt, / And I the hymn the Brahmin sings." And "la plaie et le couteau" is excerpted from the penultimate stanza of

Baudelaire's "L'Héautontimorouménos" [The Self-Tormentor]: "Je suis la plaie et le couteau! / Je suis le soufflet et la joue!" [I am the wound and the knife! / I am the blow and the cheek!]. TSE echoed this theme in "I am the Resurrection and the Life," from *TWL* drafts: "I am the victim and the sacrificial knife / I am the fire, and the butter also" (*WLF* 111). He quoted the passages from Baudelaire and Emerson to a similar purpose in his 1918 review of *The World as Imagination* (1.726).

24. *Trans*: "eternally, / Eternally gnawing his tail-end." Trans. Wardle (51). These lines concluded the poem when it first appeared as "Ébauche d'un serpent" [Sketch of a Serpent] in the *NRF* (July 1921, 5-17). Valéry rewrote them and added a stanza when he revised the poem the following year in *Charmes*. Though TSE published a translation of the revised version in the *Criterion* (Apr 1923), he recommended to Wardle on 1 Oct 1923 that the forthcoming book include the "alternative ending . . . It should form a sort of appendix" (*L2* 229); see textual note for the full appendix. TSE referred to these lines in "Marianne Moore" (497).

TEXTUAL NOTE

The following appeared as an "Appendix" on page 51 of *Le Serpent*:

> The last strophe did not exist in the first edition. The poem ended with the preceding, or thirtieth, strophe, which then read:
>
> Tu peux repousser l'infini
> Qui n'est fait que de ta croissance,
> Et de la tombe jusqu'au nid
> Te sentir toute Connaissance! . . .
> Mais ce vieil amateur d'échecs,
> Dans l'or oisif des soleils secs,
> Sur ton branchage vient se tordre,
> Et parmi l'étincellement,
> De sa queue éternellement
> Éternellement le bout mordre . . . .
>
> Thou canst repel the infinite
> That lives not from thy growth apart,
> From tomb in pit to nest in height
> Canst feel that thou all Knowledge art! . . .
> But this old lover of failures, by
> Suns that are leisured, golden, dry,
> Comes in thy boughs his coils to bend;
> And where the light goes starrily
> He lies gnawing eternally,
> Eternally gnawing his tail-end. . . .

A Commentary

The Criterion: A Quarterly Review, 3 (Jan 1925) 161-63

THE BALLET AND SERGE DIAGHILEFF

The ballet is a form of art which has a tradition three hundred years old. That tradition was kept alive and developed by the great schools of training in Italy and later in Russia. Of the great masters of dancing in these three centuries the only name known to the public of to-day – even to a very small public – is that of Cecchetti;[1] but we owe the ballet to the continuous and virtually anonymous effort of innumerable men. At the present time the ballet appears to depend almost wholly on Mr. Diaghileff. There are other ballets, and meritorious ones. But the others, so far as I know of them, all fall short in one or more of several essentials; and to lack any of these essentials is, for a ballet, to be incapable of carrying on the tradition. The perfection of physical form and technical training is essential; the assistance of dancers of exceptional genius is essential; the co-operation of the same company over a long period of time is essential; a brilliant choreographer is essential; and the Director is essential.

It is deplorable that Mr. Diaghileff has no longer the support of several of those dancers who played such important parts in the successes of several years ago; it is deplorable that dancers of genius should withdraw to the ordinary music hall turn.[2] A dozen little troupes of self-directed dancers may tour the halls; but their efforts are wasted. It is necessary that there should be one ballet, and one school to supply it, and one man at the head of it. If dancers disperse, they diminish the importance of their art. It is, for all of these considerations, a public obligation – on that part of the public which professes to care for ballet at all – to continue to support Mr. Diaghileff's ballet, and use our efforts so that on his next visit to London he may have the facilities for producing the *Sacre* and the newer work of Stravinski. Mr. Diaghileff is admittedly a great producer. We have lately been reminded by Mr. Bennett that the English stage never quite recovered from the Closing of the Theatres.[3] It is more than possible that the future of the ballet depends upon the success of Diaghileff.

THE RETURN OF MATTHEW ARNOLD

The last few years have shown a revival of interest in the prose works of Matthew Arnold; an interest more critical and judicious, I believe, than the academic estimate of Arnold as Literary Critic which prevailed some twenty years ago. At one time it seemed that Arnold was assured for perpetuity, in literary manuals, the place of the ultimate English literary critic. We realise now that Arnold was neither thorough enough, nor comprehensive enough, to make any fundamental alteration of literary values: he failed to ascend to first principles; his thought lacks the logical rigour of his master Newman; his taste is biased by convictions and prejudices which he did not take the trouble to dissect to their elements. The best of Arnold's criticism is an illustration of his ethical views, and contributes to his discrimination of the values and relations of the components of the good life.

The true significance of Arnold's prose is well exhibited by Mr. Somervell's selections, which form a very useful 185 pages of text.[4] I observe, on first reading, only one regrettable omission: the passage on Oxford in *Culture and Anarchy*. The other famous paragraph on Oxford (in the Preface to *Essays in Criticism*) is included;[5] but the omitted passage is still more eloquent of the importance which Arnold has for the present time. *We have not won our political battles, we have not carried our main points, we have not stopped our adversaries' advance, we have not marched victoriously with the modern world; but we have told silently upon the mind of the country, we have prepared currents of feeling which sap our adversaries' position when it seems gained, we have kept up our own communications with the future.*[6]

This is the Arnold who is capable of being a perpetual inspiration. His "party" has no name, and is always, everywhere and inevitably, in the minority. Were he alive to-day he would find Populace and Barbarians more philistinised, and Philistia more barbaric and proletarianised, than in his own time.[7] The greatest, the only possible victory for Arnold and his disciples is to continue to "keep up the communications" with the future and with the past.

LIGHT FROM THE EAST

Against Arnold and his party has arisen in the East a new prophet of culture. To the point of view of a periodical like *The Criterion* much of what has been said and written in impeachment and in defence of Soviet

Russia is of minor interest. Not that it is possible, or even right, for any individual to regard such matters from the point of view of pure intelligence alone; but it is well that we should all regard them from that point of view now and then. Any person, therefore, who is aware of "culture" at all, will be aware that there are and have been various cultures, and that the difference between our own culture and an alien culture is different from the difference between culture and anarchy, or culture and pseudo-culture. We may not like the notion of cannibalism or head-hunting, but that it formed part of a distinct and tenable form of culture in Melanesia is indisputable.[8] Consequently, I was prepared to find in Mr. Trotsky's book an exposition of a culture repellent to my own disposition; but I hoped that it would be distinct and interesting.[9] A revolution staged on such a vast scale, amongst a picturesque, violent, and romantic people; involving such disorder, rapine, assassination, starvation, and plague should have something to show for the expense: a new culture horrible at the worst, but in any event fascinating. Such a cataclysm is justified if it produces something really *new*:

> Un oasis d'horreur dans un désert d'ennui.[10]

It is not justified by the dreary picture of Montessori schools, playing fields, plasticene, club-houses, communal kitchens, crèches, abstinence from swearing and alcohol, a population warmly clad (or soon to be warmly clad), and with its mind filled (or in process of being filled) with nineteenth-century superstitions about Nature and her forces. Yet such phenomena as these are what Mr. Trotsky proudly presents as the outcome of his revolution; these form his "culture." Here is the Eastern prophet of the new age speaking in the smuggest tones of a New Bourgeoisie:

> The cinema amuses, educates, strikes the imagination by images, and liberates you from the need of crossing the Church door.[11]

It remains only to observe that there is no mention in Mr. Trotsky's Encheiridion of Culture of such an institution as the ballet; and that his portrait shows a slight resemblance to the face of Mr. Sidney Webb.[12]

CRITES

NOTES

1. The Italian ballet dancer and mime Enrico Cecchetti (1850-1928) developed the Cecchetti classical ballet technique and regimen for the training of dancers. The Cecchetti Society was established by Cyril Beaumont in London in 1922, with Cecchetti as its first president.

2. Diaghilev's Ballets Russes returned to London on 24 Nov 1924 for performances through 10 Jan 1925. The company was performing without several members whom TSE had admired in the 1921 season, including Léonide Massine and Lydia Lopokova, both of whom had been performing independently of Diaghilev at several London variety theaters and in musical revues like Sir Oswald Stoll's *You'd Be Surprised*, upon which TSE remarks in "Dramatis Personae" (435). TSE attended Diaghilev's productions of *Cimarosiana* and *Le Train bleu* (Cocteau) on opening night at the Coliseum; on 30 Nov, he wrote to Ottoline Morrell that the ballet "was *certainly not* worth coming over for!": "*I* think the Ballet was bad from *every* point of view, and we are very glad you think so too" (*L2* 545-46).

3. In "The Public," the last essay in a three-part series titled "What's Wrong with the Theatre?," journalist, novelist, and critic Arnold Bennett declared that the English stage "has never recovered from the blow given it by that masterful ruffian, Oliver Cromwell." *Evening Standard* (2 Dec 1924), 7; rpt. as "The Playgoing Public" in *Things that Have Interested Me, Third Series* (New York: George H. Doran, 1926), 35.

4. TSE notes D. C. Somervell's edition of *Selections from Matthew Arnold's Prose* (London: Methuen, 1924), xxiii + 197, which he had ordered for review. Beginning with the present essay, it became his frequent practice to incorporate books for review into his *Criterion* "Commentaries." Somervell (1885-1965), assistant master of Tonbridge School, was completing his *Disraeli and Gladstone* (1925).

5. The passage on Oxford begins in the concluding paragraph of Arnold's Preface to *Essays in Criticism* (London: Macmillan, 1865): "Beautiful city! So vulnerable, so lovely, so unravaged by the fierce intellectual life of our century, so serene!" (xviii-xix).

6. TSE quotes from Chapter I, "Sweetness and Light," in *Culture and Anarchy* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1869), 35-36; TSE's italics.

7. "Barbarians, Philistines, Populace," the title of chapter III of *Culture and Anarchy*, are Arnold's terms "to denote roughly the three great classes into which our society is divided" (105).

8. In "Marie Lloyd" ("In Memoriam: Marie Lloyd," 1923), TSE refers to W. H. R. Rivers's *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia* (1922), which discusses the role of cannibalism and head-hunting in the religious life of the Melanesians (420).

9. TSE ordered for review Zinaida Vengerova's translation of Leon Trotsky's *Voprosy byta* (1923), *Problems of Life* (London: Methuen, 1924), xi +114. Trotsky (1879-1940), a Bolshevist leader of the 1917 Russian Revolution and then head of the Red Army, writes as a social reformer to define the new principles of culture, education, and morals for the working-class under Communism.

10. *Trans:* "An oasis of horror in a desert of boredom!"; *read* "Une oasis"; from section VII of Baudelaire's "Le Voyage," in *Les Fleurs du mal* (1857).

11. *Problems of Life*, 43. Trotsky concludes the chapter on "Vodka, Church, and Cinema": "The cinema is a great competitor not only of the public-house, but of the Church. Here is an instrument which we must secure at all costs!"

12. With the Greek spelling and capitalization of "enchiridion," a handbook or manual, TSE likely alludes to the ethical teachings of the second-century Greek Stoic philosopher Epictetus, collected by Flavius Arrian as *Epictetou Encheiridion* [The Manual of Epictetus]. The English socialist and economist Sidney Webb was a prominent leader of the Fabian Society and co-founder of the London School of Economics.

On the Eve: A Dialogue [with Vivien Eliot][1]

The Criterion: A Quarterly Review, 3 (Jan 1925) 278-81

"PANCAKES!" exclaimed Horace as Rose handed him the dish.

"Ah, pancakes," murmured Alexander.

"I must have one, I don't care what happens," said Agatha recklessly.

They squeezed lemon-juice on their pancakes and covered them with sugar. Horace rolled his up in a neat roll, and began to eat it with gusto. Rose left the room looking pleased and complacent. The pancakes had been *her* idea – "and it makes a nice change for them," she thought.

"But, Alexander," said Agatha, continuing a discussion arising out of her country-house visit, which had begun before the arrival of the pancakes, "what I want to know is where they *keep* their money. It can't be in this country or they wouldn't be trying to work up a revolution."

"Ah," said Horace in a sinister voice, "that's about the size of it."

"And if they had it invested in another country," went on Agatha; "do listen, Alexander — "

"America," said Horace.

" – then how did they get it there? I mean, how could they manage to *sell* their horrible stocks over here and get the *cash* to invest in America?"

"Or Canada," said Horace.

"I mean to say, well, God knows *I* never can sell anything. My few bits of stuff which pay me about twopence a year are all *absolutely* unsaleable – and we all know, don't we, Alexander? that we shall be completely and utterly ruined if there is an extreme socialist government. *We* shall be destitute. But *they* won't suffer. That's obvious. They go on spending just as much, living in the lap, and yet their one interest and amusement is to pull down and shatter England."

Horace looked ferocious as he took another pancake from the dish on the sideboard. "Curse them," he said bitterly, "but you know, Agatha, you do have bad luck in always hobbing and nobbing with those sort of pie-faced blokes. There are, I assure you, a few stoutish fellows left – more than a few in fact – more than you imagine."

"But not enough to save England," said Agatha in a low voice. "Besides, they have no *confidence in themselves* — "

"Oh, I don't know. Because they're not always blustering and bleating and showing off — "

"The fact is," said Alexander at last, looking up from his plate.

"But I *must* just tell you," interrupted Agatha, "Tilly said, the other night, 'after all, the Russian Loan would not have cost so much as a General Election!'" and she imitated Tilly's drawl.

"Pooh – bosh," said Horace, "but talking of Russia, I'll tell you what old Sir Charles Allwell actually did say to me only the other night at the club," he went on eagerly, "and this'll show you, because, mind you, he is an absolute Whig and they always have been for centuries – well, *he* said that in *his* opinion the two great menaces to civilisation were *England* and *Russia*."

"Oh, I know," groaned Agatha, "I *know* that's true."

"Well, the fact is," said Alexander again, rather crossly.

"Yes, what *is* the fact?" asked Agatha ironically.

"That's what I'm trying to tell you. These friends of Agatha's – Tilly and Corrie and Lord John, and their like – are the remains of what Disraeli, I believe, called a desperate oligarchy ready, in their desire for a power they were incompetent to use, to sacrifice the laws, the empire, and the religion of England. They are 'capitalists' because they live upon a civilisation to which they contribute nothing – and they are 'anarchists' because they are ready to destroy the civilisation which bore and nourished them. There is a certain irony, of course, about the fate of these Gadarene swine. They have always stood for 'progress' – and the progress which they set in motion is on the point of obliterating them for ever — "

"You might just ring the bell, will you, Horace," said Agatha.

"They have stood for the extension of democracy – and now that democracy is extended to the utmost, democracy is on the point of deposing them in favour of a new oligarchy stronger and more terrible than their own — "

"Are you ready for the coffee, 'm?" asked Rose.

"Yes, please."

"Yes, because I've got to be off, you know," added Horace.

"They cling, at the last, to the paltry satisfaction of 'holding the balance of power' between two parties both of which they affect to despise. They have been squandering everything that the humble people have worked to create – soldiers and generals and diplomats and administrators are humble people, in my opinion," said Alexander acidly. "The Whigs have no

principles," he continued, summing up judicially. "Look at their policies towards Russia, and Ireland, and India — "

"Yes, poor old Ireland – that's where they got *us*," interjected Horace.

"But they will never see what has happened. It is at their dinner-tables that one hears the most antiquated political theories, and the most unintelligent expressions of the most snobbish and insincere literary taste. Constitutional government," pursued Alexander, now well away —

"Speed it up!" said Horace.

"– is no longer possible. It does not matter how *this* election turns out. No election matters now. The best we can hope for, the only thing that can save us, is a dictator."

"Good old Mussolini," shouted Agatha.

"But a dictatorship is only a palliative — " He paused to light a cigarette.

Horace, who had, during the whole of dinner, been surreptitiously reading the *Evening Standard*, which he held folded on his knee, now suddenly burst loudly into song, in the hoarse, quavering voice which is used by songsters in the streets of London –

It's the sime the whole world over –
    It's the pore what gets the blime,
It's the rich what gets the pleashur:
    Isn't it a ber-loody shime!

he sang.

"Well," he said, rising from the table, "thanks for the pleasant discourse. I've got to shove off to the club now. See y' later."

Agatha followed him out of the room. Alexander was left, brooding over his coffee. The door opened again and Agatha thrust her head in.

"I say, can you lend me some money?" she asked. "I simply must pay Rose." Alexander obliged, and Agatha again left him.

"Good night, 'm," shouted Rose, "good night, sir," and she stumped out and left the flat. She was going to meet her friend and line up for the second house at the Metropolitan Music Hall. She walked down the wide staircase, sniffing loudly as the cold air met her nostrils after the hot kitchen. In the flat, sniffing had to be restrained – but once outside —

"Ow-oo," cooed Lizzie the lift-girl, as Rose passed the lift, in which Lizzie sat knitting a jumper. "Aren't you la-eete!"

"They been sitting over their coffee," Rose said glumly. "It's always the way if you want to go out anywhere."

"What a sha-aime," said Lizzie. "Ow-oo, isn't that a lovely fer-lower you've got!"

"My lady give me that; she brought a great big bunch o' them back from where she been staying. 'Ot 'ouse flowers, they are."

"Ow-oo, it's ni-eece to be rich, isn't it," chanted Lizzie happily.

"Ah," said Rose meaningly, with the air of one who knows both sides of a question. She sniffed. "Well, I'll say good night," and she passed through the swinging doors.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. This dialogue, which bore the attribution "by T. S. Eliot" under the title when it was printed, was written in some collaboration with Vivien Eliot, the primary author, who preferred anonymity and wrote several pieces for the *Criterion* under various pseudonyms (see Gallup 211). On 11 Nov 1955 TSE dictated a letter to a student who was requesting permission to quote from the dialogue in a doctoral dissertation: "To the best of Mr. Eliot's recollection, he merely added some touches to this slight dialogue. The political opinions of the speakers cannot be taken as expressing the views of Mr. Eliot himself at the time, and he considers the remarks in themselves of no importance." On 19 Feb 1965, Valerie Eliot wrote to Peter du Sautoy that the piece "was not written by [TSE]. He told me that it had been written in fact by Vivienne. He could not remember whether he had touched it up in any way, but he published it to try and encourage her."

A Commentary

The Criterion: A Quarterly Review, 3 (Apr 1925) 341-44

It is regretted that, owing to severe illness, Mr. T. S. Eliot has been unable to prepare his essay on "A Neglected Aspect of George Chapman" for this number; also a review of *The Sanskrit Theatre*, by Professor A. B. Keith, and a review of *Restoration Comedy*, by Bonamy Dobree.[1]

THE STUDY OF GREEK

The Head Master of Eton, writing on "The Praise of Greek" in *The Evening Standard*, has put in a couple of columns the usual arguments in favour of the study of Greek.[2] Any argument in favour of the study of Greek is a good argument – though it is a pity that Doctor Alington thought to reinforce his case by quoting some turgid generalities by Professor Gilbert Murray[3] – and we have no quarrel with those advanced in "The Praise of Greek." It would be as well, however, if advocates of Greek would occasionally expound the best reasons, as well as those most likely to persuade the modern public. The latter are those attached to the romantic conception to which Mr. Frederic Manning has given the title of "Hellas."[4] They include the rather doubtful assertions that Greek is "the greatest of languages" and that Greek literature is "the greatest of literatures": assertions doubtful because the standards for such a comparative judgment cannot be found. The former, *i.e.* the unpopular, reasons include two which immediately occur to my mind. One is that the study of a dead language is the study of a language not in process of change, and therefore an exact study; and the study of Greek is the exact study of an exact language, a language of refinement and precision. And the other reason is that the study of Greek is a part of the study of our own mind. Our categories of thought are largely the outcome of Greek thought; our categories of emotion are largely the outcome of Greek literature. One of the advantages of the study of a more alien language, such as one of the more highly developed oriental languages, is to throw this fact into bold relief: a mind saturated with the traditions of Indian philosophy is and must always remain very different from one saturated with the traditions

of European philosophy – as is *every* European mind, even when untrained and unread. What analytic psychology attempts to do for the individual mind, the study of history – including language and literature – does for the collective mind. Neglect of Greek means for Europe *a relapse into unconsciousness*.

MR. SAINTSBURY'S LAST SCRAP BOOK

The appearance of a new book by George Saintsbury is now the occasion for editorial rather than critical notice.[5] For the readers of Mr. Saintsbury resemble the readers of Anatole France in this respect, that they receive with equal delight everything that he writes. The work of George Saintsbury, even when he writes of Quintilian or Scaliger, is extremely personal:[6] I imagine that many persons who do not share his general point of view must find his writings antipathetic. In his literary interests, in his political views, in his culinary tastes, he is the representative of a fine tradition. I am not sure that his intimate readers will not treasure his Scrap Books more than any other of his works; for here all the sides of his personality are illustrated. And I am not sure that this personality is not as great an asset to England as was that of Anatole France to his country. But the services of Mr. Saintsbury are not such as are often distinguished, or measured, by official recognition.

SIR JAMES FRAZER AND THE ORDER OF MERIT

In recording the death of Francis Herbert Bradley I expressed the hope that his successor in the Order of Merit might be Sir James Frazer. This hope has been fulfilled.[7] It is satisfactory that the greatest representative, in his time, of the mind of Oxford should be succeeded by the greatest representative of Cambridge. The influence of Frazer on our generation cannot yet be accurately estimated; but it is comparable to that of Renan, and perhaps more enduring than that of Sigmund Freud.

MISS MARIANNE MOORE

Our contemporary, *The Dial*, of New York, has justly bestowed its annual award for literature upon Miss Marianne Moore. In the dismal flood of affected and fantastical verse poured out in America within the last ten years, Miss Moore's poetry endures, "The wave may go over it if it likes."[8] She is one of the few who have discovered an original *rhythm* – in an age

when the defect of rhythm is the most eminent failure of verse both English and American. She has found a new verse-rhythm of the spoken phrase. Miss Moore's work is of international importance, and her book will be the subject of review in a later number.

THE CLOSING OF THE THEATRES TO FOREIGN PLAYS

A gentleman writing in a contemporary monthly has made the suggestion that a tax should be levied upon imported plays.[9] It is not quite clear whether he means this seriously, or has merely hit upon the notion as an attractive introduction to his thesis that we have too many foreign plays, and that these plays are very often worse than the native product. He has our sympathy, however, in complaining that these foreign plays (French comedies or American farces) are often bad in themselves and often very stupidly adapted: a French comedy may be expurgated into senselessness and British humour substituted in a play which structurally demands French wit. All of this is true enough but it is a pity that this critic should have raised, even for a pleasantry, the spectre of "artistic protection." Protection is of course an economic doctrine depending for its validity upon time, place and circumstance. It is applicable to *Industry* – to art only so far as art is an industry. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish: the point at which a musician becomes an "artist" and ceases to be merely a unit, subject to trades-union rules, has been the cause of contention before now. In the doubtful cases we should like to see Governments incline a little more to the side of art.

As for Mr. Owen's main thesis, we agree about the inferior quality of many foreign plays and of the adaptations. The frequent production of the *best* foreign plays would seem to us a good thing: for it might make London a competitor of Berlin as an international centre of the theatre. But whereas we get, in London, only such foreign plays as have already appeared, and succeeded, abroad, the more enterprising producers of Berlin or New York will sometimes accept an English play on its merits *before* it has tried its fortunes here.

JACQUES RIVIÈRE

As this number of *The Criterion* goes to press we learn, with great regret, of the death, at the age of thirty-nine years, of Jacques Rivière, editor of the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, and a contributor to *The Criterion*. The death of

this distinguished editor, who was also becoming known as one of the most subtle and penetrating of critics of literature, is a serious loss to French and to international letters. To those who knew his personal charm and enthusiasm the loss is greater still.[10]

CRITES

NOTES

1. See "A Neglected Aspect of Chapman" (548). A review of *The Sanskrit Drama* (1924) by A. B. (Arthur Berriedale) Keith (1879-1944), Regius Professor of Sanskrit at the University of Edinburgh, never appeared; Richard Aldington's review of *Restoration Comedy, 1660-1720* by Bonamy Dobrée (1891-1974) appeared in Apr 1926.

2. Rev. C. A. Alington, D. D. (1872-1955), "The Praise of Greek. / Its Virtues for the Schoolboy," *Evening Standard* (18 Feb 1925), 7.

3. Alington quotes from the conclusion of Gilbert Murray's essay, "The Value of Greece to the Future of the World" (1921): "Through calm and storm, [Greece] does hold up her lights; she lit them first of the nations and held them during her short reign the dearest; and whether we believe in an individual life founded on Freedom, Reason, Beauty, Excellence, and the pursuit of Truth, and an international life aiming at the fellowship between man and man . . . there is good cause for some of us in each generation . . . to study such important forces where they first appear consciously in the minds of our spiritual ancestors." For TSE's extensive critique of Murray's translations, see "Euripides and Professor Murray" (195).

4. Frederic Manning, an Australian writer who settled in England in 1903, had reviewed Arnold Toynbee's *Greek Historical Thought* and *Greek Civilisation and Character* in the *Criterion* of Oct 1924, declaring that Professor Toynbee "has fastened upon a generalization, 'Hellas,' and injected into it his own value and his own truth, or what he accepts as equivalents for truth and value. This subjective method, a characteristic defect in Professor Gilbert Murray . . . becomes in Professor Toynbee almost a vice. They each present us with an ideal Hellas in which there is no time" (136).

5. George Saintsbury, *A Last Scrapbook* (London: Macmillan, 1924). Pp. xiii + 344.

6. Saintsbury devotes chapters to the Roman rhetorician and writer Quintilian (ca. 35-ca. 99) and to the Renaissance humanist and philosopher Julius Caesar Scaliger (1484-1558) in his *A History of Criticism and Literary Taste in Europe from the Earliest Texts* (1902).

7. Sir James George Frazer, knighted in 1914, was awarded the Order of Merit on 1 Jan 1925. TSE anticipated the award in his *Criterion* "Commentary" of Oct 1924, when he also noted the death of Bradley on 18 Sept 1924 (539).

8. Moore won the annual *Dial* prize of $2,000 for her second book of poems, *Observations* (New York: The Dial Press, 1924), a prize that TSE had won for *The Waste Land* in 1922. TSE quotes from her "In the Days of Prismatic Color" in *Poems* (1921), which he reviewed in "Marianne Moore" (495). Moore's *Observations* was reviewed by Richard Aldington in *Criterion* 3, (July 1925), 588-94.

9. Untraced.

10. Rivière, editor of the *NRF* since 1919, died of typhoid fever on 14 Feb. TSE met him in Paris in 1911 and began petitioning him for a contribution to the *Criterion* after they saw each

other again in Paris in Jan 1922, when he agreed to send Rivière a regular "Lettre d'Angleterre" for the *NRF* (*L1* 624). Rivière's "Notes on a Possible Generalisation of the Theories of Freud," trans. F. S. Flint, appeared in *Criterion*, 1 (July 1923), 329-47. For TSE's tribute, published in French in the *NRF*, see "Rencontre" (585).

The Ballet

A review of *The Dance: An Historical Survey of Dancing in Europe*, by Cecil J. Sharp and A. P. Oppé

London: Halton and Truscott Smith, 1924. Pp. xv + 54; 75 plates.

Mudrās: The Ritual Hand-Poses of the Buddha Priests and Shiva Priests, by Tyra De Kleen. Introduction by A. J. D. Campbell

London: Kegan Paul, 1924. Pp. 58; 60 plates.[1]

The Criterion: A Quarterly Review, 3 (Apr 1925) 441-43

The late Cecil Sharp was a scholar of many services to the study of English ballads, English dance, and English music, and it is a pleasure to observe that this book, which is in a sense a memorial to him, has been produced as such a book ought to be. Mr. Oppé has performed his work well, and carried out the design of Mr. Sharp by providing a number of illustrations which are of great interest in the history of dancing, and which the publishers have had beautifully reproduced. The text of Cecil Sharp makes us admire his erudition and deplore his premature death. It should have been much longer. Short as it is, it shows the result of years of study.[2]

When so much has been said – for the volume is a precious one – there are several qualifications to be made by the critical mind. Sharp was an historian, but not a philosopher or an anthropologist: consequently his brief notes are not only inadequate, but are even conducive to error. For to the study of the dance, including its highest forms – the ballet and the mass – several interests and qualifications are necessary. Anyone who would penetrate to the spirit of dancing – and, therefore, anyone who would contribute to our imagination of what the ballet may perform in the future – should begin by a close study of dancing amongst primitive peoples – *vide* the Australian ceremonies described by Spencer and Gillen and Hewett;[3] of dancing amongst developed peoples, such as the Tibetans and the Javanese. He should have, furthermore, a first-hand knowledge of the technique of the ballet from bar practice to toe work. He should frequent the society of dancers, musicians, choreographers, and producers. He should have studied

the evolution of Christian and other liturgy. (For is not the High Mass – as performed, for instance, at the Madeleine in Paris – one of the highest developments of dancing?)[4] And, finally, he should track down the secrets of rhythm in the (still undeveloped) science of neurology.

This ideal critic of the dance – who should combine the learning of Rome, Cambridge, and Harley Street[5] – does not yet exist. We cannot reproach Cecil Sharp for not fulfilling this ideal. But it is not irreverent to the dead to observe that Cecil Sharp's limited knowledge – and of course limited interests – lead him to a very partial view, and to very doubtful conclusions. It is obvious that Sharp had never really understood the modern ballet (such as that of Diaghilev). He did not, for one thing, analyse the essential difference between "dancing" and "acrobatics." This is a capital point, for it calls into question both his judgment and his sensibility.

The difference between acrobatics and dancing may be observed in any music-hall: it is a difference of total effect, of the faculty to which the performer appeals. The acrobat, however bad or good, appeals to the mind rather than to the senses. We admire his *skill*, we say, that is difficult, and, we could not do that – or we are pleased by *mere* surprise or novelty (this includes the pot-house patron as well as the reader of these lines). There are acrobats, such as Rastelli, whose juggling appeals to our sense of beauty of form; but this is an added gift.[6] The primary appeal of acrobatics is to the mind. In *dancing*, the physical skill is ancillary to another effect. You must have the skill, or you cannot produce this effect; but the appreciation of skill is for the trained critic alone, not for the general audience.

An ignorance of this distinction gives to the writing of Cecil Sharp a somewhat smug, Margaret Morris, Chelsea-cum-Golders Green flavour.[7] He is all against "acrobatic virtuosity" and "toe dancing." Why? I fear that some prejudice, unworthy of the serious student of an art, is operative.

And Cecil Sharp is a confirmed – and I must say dangerous – radical. For he seems to have wished to substitute for the traditional ballet a *native* ballet (another "protectionist fallacy," when the ballet is so completely international?)[8] "founded on folk-dance technique." Here, again, I believe that he fails from negligence of distinctions. (Incidentally, he observes that one fault of the traditional ballet is that it uses the legs only! . . . as if every aspirant to a pantomime chorus did not have to devote years of study to arm and hand poses – as if there were no difference between the Russian and the Italian ways of turning the hand.) Here Cecil Sharp fails to

distinguish between *founding* and borrowing. There is certainly much that can be borrowed. And, as an example of the possibilities of the latter, I refer to an interesting book – *Mudras* – a book of much more interest and value to the student of the dance than even Mr. Sharp's. Here is a study, with most valuable illustrations, of the arm and hand movements and poses of the priests of Bali (an island near Java). I believe that the ballet could *borrow* a great deal from the beautiful and varied movements of the hands exhibited in this book.

But, as for *founding* – for founding a new ballet on a dead ritual – that is a different matter. Of what value is it to "revive" the Sword Dance, except as a Saturday afternoon alternative to tennis and badminton for active young men in garden suburbs? For you cannot *revive* a ritual without reviving a faith. You can *continue* a ritual after the faith is dead – that is not a conscious, "pretty" piece of archaeology – but you cannot *revive* it. But the question of what the ballet of the future should be "founded on" must be reserved for a further note.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Cecil J. Sharp, (1859-1924), British dance and song collector and founder in 1911 of the English Folk Dance Society; A. P. Oppé (1878-1957), art historian and collector of British drawings. The Swedish artist Tyra af Kleen (1874-1951) held an exhibition of her watercolor drawings in London's Victoria & Albert Museum in 1923, illustrating the ceremonial dances of the people and the symbolic hand-gestures (*mudrās*) of the priests, as performed on the island of Bali. A. J. D. Campbell (1875-1947) was Assistant Keeper of the Indian Section of the V&A Museum.

2. Sharp died on 23 June 1924, just before completing the book under review. TSE read Rolf Gardiner's memorial tribute to Sharp in "The English Folk Dance," printed in the issue of *Youth* (Summer 1924) that he discussed in his *Criterion* "Commentary" for Oct 1924 (539).

3. The anthropologists William Baldwin Spencer and his co-author Francis James Gillen described primitive Australian marriage customs and dances in *The Native Tribes of Central Australia* (1899), which TSE read in graduate school at Harvard. Edgar Lee Hewett (1865-1946), American archaeologist, anthropologist, and educator at the University of New Mexico, studied Native American customs and ceremonies and was the author of *Antiquities of the Jemez Plateau, New Mexico* (1906) and *Ancient Ruins of the Southwest* (1909).

4. The Église de la Madeleine (La Madeleine), in the 8th arrondisement of Paris, well known for the stylized ritual of its High Mass. TSE later referred to the classical architecture of the church in his *Criterion* "Commentary" of June 1927, and he wrote of the pleasure of the "High Mass at the Madeleine" in a letter to Geoffrey Faber on 18 Sept 1927 (*L3* 712).

5. Harley Street, London W1, known since the nineteenth century for the array of private medical specialists, including neurologists, with offices and clinics there.

6. TSE had likely seen Enrico Rastelli perform in 1923; he refers to the cathartic effects of the experience in "The Beating of a Drum" (473).

7. TSE refers to the arts communities and clubs in the London boroughs of Chelsea and Golders Green. The British dancer, choreographer, and dance teacher Margaret Morris founded the Margaret Morris Club in Chelsea in 1915 with her husband, the painter John Duncan Fergusson. This avant-garde group, which included among its members Ezra Pound, Wyndham Lewis, Katherine Mansfield, Jacob Epstein, and Augustus John, was instrumental in founding after the war the Arts League of Service, which aimed to bring the arts into everyday life, and under whose auspices TSE delivered the lecture "Modern Tendencies in Poetry" in 1919 (211).

8. TSE discussed "the spectre of 'artistic protection'" with regard to the theatre in his "Commentary" at the beginning of the issue of the *Criterion* in which the present essay also appeared (578).

Rencontre

La Nouvelle Revue française, 24 (1 Apr 1925) [657]-58[1]

C'est en 1911 que je rencontrai Jacques Rivière, pour la première fois. Son beau-frère, le regretté Alain-Fournier, m'avait conduit chez lui afin de lui demander conseil au sujet d'un travail de quelque envergure que je désirais présenter à l'Université. Étudiant, très jeune et gauche, je n'étais pas sans éprouver quelque gêne en présence du secrétaire de la *Nouvelle Revue Française*. De cet entretien au cours duquel j'obtins tous les renseignements et tous les conseils que je désirais, – mais dont, hélas, je n'ai jamais pu faire usage – j'ai gardé une impression fort semblable à celle que je ressentis dix ans plus tard, la seconde fois que je revis Jacques Rivière. Je me rappelle une silhouette fragile, une personnalité charmante et gracieuse, un esprit si alerte et si enthousiaste que déjà alors il semblait presque une menace pour le corps délicat qui l'abritait. « Je suis en train de préparer un grand article sur Gide », dit-il. Il s'agissait de l'essai qui fut publié plus tard dans *Études*. Lorsque je revis ensuite Rivière, en 1921, son esprit était resté le même, ses manières aussi ; mais le corps semblait plus fragile encore, et il l'était en effet.

Il est difficile à un étranger de dire sur la personnalité et sur les œuvres de Rivière des choses qui n'aient pas été dites par des hommes plus compétents ou qui l'ont connu de plus près. Mais au moment où Rivière se mourait, je parcourais le manuscrit de cette brillante série de conférences écrites sur l'œuvre de Proust, que lui et Ramon Fernandez avaient faites en Suisse, et que nous espérions les voir faire prochainement en Angleterre. C'en est fait de cet espoir, mais me voyant ainsi forcé d'abandonner ce projet, le désir que j'avais de voir les milieux littéraires en Angleterre se familiariser avec la méthode critique employée par Rivière, n'en est que plus vif. Son essai sur l'emploi des théories de Freud en littérature, paru dans le *Criterion*, a frappé l'attention du public anglais. Mais je pense aux *Études*, et plus encore à cet article remarquable publié l'année dernière par la *Nouvelle Revue Française* sur la *Crise du Concept de Littérature*, ainsi qu'à ses conférences. Les œuvres de jeunesse de Rivière me semblent témoigner d'un enthousiasme parfois un peu trop partial, d'un trop grand besoin de théorie (mais je m'exprime ici en faisant les plus grandes réserves). Dans ses dernières œuvres, par

contre, on sent un esprit plus large et plus tolérant ; elles allient à la souplesse et à la finesse une précision sans rigidité. Pour un esprit comme le mien, trop disposé à mesurer toutes choses selon les règles d'une conception dogmatique qui tendrait de plus en plus à devenir rigide et formelle, la méthode critique employée par Rivière est une excellente discipline. Et en Angleterre où la critique littéraire tend, ou bien à s'adoucir en une aimable indulgence, ou bien à se durcir en une rigide théorie, la pénétration et la modération d'un esprit comme celui de Rivière, seraient d'un exemple des plus salutaires. Son admirable définition du rôle et de la fonction de la littérature devrait devenir pour chacun de nous un objet de méditation.

T. S. ELIOT

Translation:

ENCOUNTER

It was in 1911 that I met Jacques Rivière for the first time.[2] His brother-in-law, the late Alain-Fournier, had taken me to his house in order to ask his advice on an ambitious project that I wanted to present at the University.[3] Still a student, very young and awkward, I was not without some embarrassment in the presence of the subeditor of the *Nouvelle Revue française*. From this interview, during the course of which I obtained all the information and advice I had hoped for –but which, alas, I was never able to put to use – I kept an impression very similar to the one I felt ten years later, the second time I saw Jacques Rivière. I recall a fragile figure, a charming and gracious personality, a mind so alert and enthusiastic that already then it seemed almost a threat for the delicate body that housed it. "I am in the process of preparing a long article on Gide," he said. He was referring to the essay that was later published in *Études*.[4] When I saw Rivière again, in 1921, his mind had remained the same, as had his manners; but his body seemed even more fragile, which in fact it was.

It is difficult for a foreigner to say anything about the personality and works of Rivière which has not already been said by men more competent or who knew him better. But at the time when Rivière was dying, I glanced through the manuscript of this brilliant series of lectures written on the work of Proust which he and Ramon Fernandez had delivered in Switzerland, and which we were hoping they would soon deliver in England as well.[5] So much for my hope; but seeing myself forced to abandon this project, my desire to see the literary milieu in England become familiar with the

critical method employed by Rivière was only more vivid. His essay on the use of Freud's theories in literature that appeared in the *Criterion* caught the attention of the English public.[6] But I think of the *Études*, and even more of that remarkable article published last year in the *Nouvelle Revue française* on the "Crisis of the Concept of Literature," as well as of his lectures.[7] The works of Rivière's youth seem to me to exhibit an enthusiasm that is sometimes a bit too partial, and too great a need for theory (but I say this here with the greatest of reservations). In his last works, on the other hand, one senses a broader and more tolerant mind; they combine a flexibility and fineness with a precision without rigidity. For a mind such as mine, too disposed to measuring all things according to the rules of a dogmatic conception that tends increasingly to become rigid and formal, the critical method employed by Rivière is an excellent discipline. And in England, where literary criticism tends either to soften itself in a pleasant indulgence or to harden itself in a rigid theory, the penetrating and moderate mind of someone like Rivière would be one of the most beneficial of examples. His admirable definition of the role and function of literature should become an object of meditation for each of us.

NOTES

1. This issue of *NRF* was dedicated to Rivière, who edited the journal from 1919 until his death on 14 Feb 1925; titled "Homage à Jacques Rivière 1886-1925," it contained tributes from French and foreign authors, the latter published under the heading "Témoignages étrangers."

2. TSE had noted the death of Rivière and paid a brief tribute to him at the end of his *Criterion* "Commentary" for Apr 1925 (578-79).

3. Alain-Fournier, *nom de plume* of Henri-Alban Fournier (1886-1914), was TSE's private tutor in French language and literature during his year at the Sorbonne in 1910-11.

4. Rivière's *Études* (Paris: Éditions de la NRF, 1911), comprising essays on French musicians, painters, and writers, including Baudelaire, Paul Claudel, and André Gide. The two-part essay on Gide concluded the volume (175-261).

5. Two months before his death, Rivière and the French-educated philosopher and critic Ramon Fernandez (1894-1944), born in Venezuela of Mexican parents, had debated in public lectures given in Lausanne and Geneva the relation of literature and morality, with a focus on Proust, but with attention to Racine, Rousseau, Montaigne, and Rimbaud. TSE attempted to find support for the lectures in London, but the plan did not materialize. They were eventually published as *Moralisme et littérature*, with a preface by Fernandez, in 1932.

6. Rivière's "Notes on a Possible Generalisation of the Theories of Freud," trans. F. S. Flint, appeared in the *Criterion* of July 1923, 329-47.

7. In "La crise du concept de littérature" (*NRF*, 11 [1 Feb 1924]), Rivière attacked the Romantic confusion of literature with religion, prompting TSE to write to him on 17 Apr 1924: "You have asked questions and you have expounded a point of view which is, in fact, extremely

close to mine . . . As . . . the philosophy which you seek to destroy is even more widespread in England than in France, I can't help feeling rather sad at the thought that the article . . . cannot be used for the *Criterion*" (*L2* 375-76). He then praised the article in his *Criterion* "Commentary" of July 1924 (531).

Why Rural Verse[1]

A review of *Spring Thunder and Other Poems*

by Mark Van Doren

New York: Thomas Seltzer, 1924. Pp. 69.

The Nation (New York), 120 (15 Apr 1925) 432

Racial migrations and the economic conditions of modern life have had one consequence which, among so many others, has been neglected. The universal and rapid growth of the reading public has produced a variety of cultures existing side by side in the same village, in the same street, exhibiting differences even between members of the same family. How much more difficult to establish principles of literary criticism than in the eighteenth century, when there still existed a certain unity of the educated classes both in town and country, in England and America! Now we are divided by space, by taste, by faction; and here in England, in London, different groups of poets are almost unintelligible to each other.

One of the points of division is that between urban and rural poetry. I myself – to make a personal confession – have never criticized, because I never understood, a well-known type of contemporary poetry which is occupied almost exclusively with the English countryside.[2] Mr. Van Doren's poems have, incidentally, but not without cause of their merit, helped me to understand this defect.

Moreover, literature has – partly for economic reasons, i.e., the necessity for grinding journalistic axes – tended to concentrate its activities in a few international capitals. There it becomes occupied chiefly with metropolitan emotions and sensations. And the metropolitan public, composed of various races and various social origins, has in common only these metropolitan feelings and emotions. Here too the *metic* plays a large part; for the metic, like the Jew, can only thoroughly naturalize himself in cities.[3] Hence we find: first, that the most sensational and (internationally) successful poetry is of the metropolitan type; and second, that poetry dealing with nature has always a limited, but *still* a very strong appeal.

I have no solution to offer for the problems of modern life. But, while we wait, I know that it is a good thing that rural verse should be written. We

cannot hope for the comparative unity of Virgil's or Dante's Italy or of Chaucer's or Shakespeare's England, but we can preserve the fragments. Which is what verse like Mr. Van Doren's helps us to do. I – to return to the confessional vein – cannot enjoy poetry about the English country, though I admire the beauty of that country itself; I do not so consciously admire the beauty of the American country (for me, Northeastern America), but it must have a profound significance for me, because I enjoy Mr. Van Doren's poems in the same way, I think, that English readers enjoy the poetry of Mr. De la Mare and Mr. Blunden.[4] I believe that it is of at least the same excellence; but I do not believe that anyone exists who could decide this question; the two languages have no absolute equivalence. So great is the importance of association, and so chimerical the ideal of "pure art." Mr. Van Doren seems to me the more meditative, the more introspective; but it is difficult to analyze differences of mind, when differences of material are already so great (yet so intangible). It is not that I am treating any of these poets as "descriptive" writers; it is what they evoke that is to me so different.

Mr. Van Doren's verse is well written. (I question only his use of "intervene" as a transitive verb on page 61.)[5] It has an atmosphere like the clear, sharp air of *mon pays*.[6] Although, in a review, it is unfair to the book not to do so, I do not wish to distract attention from my generalization about his work by quoting particular passages. I wish only to repeat that poetry like that of Mr. Robert Frost and that of Mr. Van Doren is a valuable antidote to the Manhattan brilliance and often sham originality by which American poetry has lately come to be known.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Written between 7 Jan and 26 Feb 1925. Mark Van Doren, then literary editor at the *Nation* (New York), asked TSE to review his book on 28 Nov 1924. When TSE sent the typescript of the present review on 26 Feb, he wrote: "I feel that my review fails to express the pleasure which your book gave me, but I was tempted by the fact that it proved such an excellent instance of a thesis. There is very little good verse in America of the kind that you write" (*L2* 596). The original typescript of this review is in the Butler Library, Columbia University. For TSE's review of Van Doren's *The Poetry of John Dryden* (1920), see "John Dryden" (350).

2. TSE refers to the Georgian poets, whom he says "insist upon the English countryside, and are even positively patriotic" (1.573). He remarked frequently upon their annual collection, *Georgian Poetry*, which he referred to as "the annual scourge of the Georgian Anthology" (1.711).

3. *Metic*: in ancient Greece, a foreigner without citizenship or other rights in a Greek city-state; Charles Maurras is credited with reviving the term ("métèque") in 1894 to refer pejoratively to immigrants in France. In a postscript to his letter to Van Doren on 26 Feb 1925, which

included the typescript of the present review, TSE wrote: "If the allusions to Jews are undesirable you may omit them" (*L2* 597).

4. Van Doren was born and raised on a farm in Hope, Illinois, the rural setting for many of his poems. Edmund Blunden (1896-1974) was author of *The Barn* (1916), *Pastorals* (1916), *The Waggoner* (1920), and other volumes; he was raised in the village of Yalding, Kent, but had been teaching at the University of Tokyo since 1924. Walter de la Mare's verse appeared in each of the *Georgian Poetry* anthologies between 1912 and 1922.

5. In the last line of "Communication," Van Doren writes: "Then all around / The current intervened its sound."

6. *mon pays*: my country.

Autobiographical Note[1]

Harvard College Class of 1910, Quindecennial Report

Norwood, MA: Plimpton Press, June 1925. 37

Records of the Class

THOMAS STEARNS ELIOT: banker; married Vivien Haigh Haigh-Wood, London, 1915; publications: *Prufrock*, 1917; *The Sacred Wood*, 1920; *Ara Vos Prec*, 1920; *The Waste Land*, 1922; *John Dryden*, 1925; *Literature and Export Trade*, 1925;[2] contributions to the *Times*, the *Criterion*, the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, the *Nation*, the *Dial*, *Vanity Fair*, *Lloyds Bank Economic Review*; addresses: (home) 9 Clarence Gate Gardens, London, N. W. 1; (business) Lloyds Bank Ltd. 20, King William St., E. C. 4, London, England.

NOTES

1. For TSE's previous autobiographical notes, see the third and fourth reports of the class of 1910 (1.510; 2.300).

2. Regarding this title, TSE wrote to Donald Gallup on 18 Nov 1936: "I cannot recall how *Literature and Export Trade* got into the Class List. It must have been either a small leg-pull of my own, or a confusion on the part of somebody else. There is no such work in existence. I was certainly concerned at one time with export trade, and at the time mentioned, 1924-25, I was writing monthly articles on foreign currency movements for the Lloyds Bank monthly magazine [i.e., *Lloyds Bank Economic Review*]. I am afraid I have no copies of the magazine with my contributions, which were, like other contributions to that paper, unsigned" (Gallup, 362-63).

English Satire

An unsigned review of *English Satire and Satirists* by Hugh Walker

London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1925. Pp. x + 325.

Times Literary Supplement, 1247 (10 Dec 1925) 854

This book is the most recent addition to a series entitled "Channels of English Literature," each volume of which undertakes the history of a *genre* in English literature from earliest times to the present.[1] Literary history of this type has peculiar limitations. The history of any *genre* within the limits of one language is liable to be no more than a chronicle; for the reason that the really interesting and fruitful generalizations can hardly be drawn within such boundaries. Generalization will probably trespass beyond the limits of language – the development of satire, for instance, is a European, not a local affair – or outside the boundaries of the *genre* in question. And there is no more difficult subject to treat in such a scheme than the subject of satire. For it has not – as has the drama, for instance – any definite technique. And the authors of satire have often occupied themselves with other literary activities as well; or like Chaucer, have not been primarily satirists at all.

If we remind ourselves of the peculiar difficulties and peculiar limitations of the task, we must affirm that Professor Walker has succeeded.[2] His book has in the first place the merits of a good chronicle; it is complete, well-proportioned and orderly. In detail it exhibits a judgment which is sound and independent; on several authors Professor Walker is so interesting as to make the reader regret that his subject prevents him from considering the whole of their work. The simplest method of testing such a book is to examine its treatment of a major and of a minor author in each of several periods. We have found no opinion or judgment in his book which need be called into question. On the great – Chaucer, Dryden, Pope, Byron, – Professor Walker may have said nothing very new, but he has said everything very well. Of the small, he raises many to their proper places. To Churchill he is just.[3] To Dunbar, neglected even by many readers who can admire Skelton, he awards his proper dues.[4] He is certainly correct in

emphasizing the derivative mediocrity of Johnson's *London*, and in insisting that Johnson as satirist and as poet must be judged by the wonderful *Vanity of Human Wishes*.[5] Few persons who read this book attentively will fail to discover some opinion of their own to be revised, or some author to be examined whom they had previously neglected. The satirical verse of Canning, for example, should certainly be better known:

> But *French* philanthropy; – whose boundless mind
> Glows with the general love of all mankind;
> Philanthropy, – beneath whose baneful sway
> Each patriot passion sinks, and dies away . . .
>
> No – through the extended globe his feelings run
> As broad and general as th' unbounded sun!
> No narrow bigot *he*; – *his* reason'd view,
> Thy interests, England, ranks with thine, Peru! . . .
>
> A steady Patriot of the World alone,
> The friend of every country – but his own.[6]

To another class of writer also, and that the most unfortunate, Professor Walker renders justice: to the small men who have invented or adapted a form made perfect by the great who have eclipsed and superseded them.

The most difficult part of the task is the latter half of the nineteenth century, where verse satire is rare, but where the mood of satire is widely diffused. But on the most conspicuous satirical figure of the close of the century, Samuel Butler, Dr. Walker is not only sound but new; and his opinion marks a sane reaction against the exaggerated applause which followed complete neglect. *The Way of All Flesh* commits greater offenses against *literary* taste than does the often reprehended "Voyage to the Houhynyms."[7] For the profession of Butler's prodigious novel is realism, and realism collapses if there is the slightest suspicion of prejudice or petulance. And Dr. Walker shows that Butler sometimes loaded his dice. Swift employed the form of extravaganza which allows much greater artistic licence to the passions. And Swift, after all – though this is a purely biographical defence – was fulfilling that destiny of his nature which slowly and inevitably led to madness; but there is no such extenuation for pure crankiness and eccentricity. Satire, Dr. Walker sadly admits, is "a relatively

low form of literature" [119]; but in Swift perhaps it rose as near to the highest as it ever has risen, or ever is likely to rise.

NOTES

1. Published by J. M. Dent and edited by W. H. Oliphant Smeaton, the series began in 1912 with W. Macneile Dixon's *English Epic and Heroic Poetry* and subsequently included *Lyric Poetry* (by Ernest Rhys, 1913), *The English Novel* (George Saintsbury, 1913), *English Drama* (Felix Schelling, 1914), and others.

2. Hugh Walker (1855-1939), professor of English at St. David's College, Lampeter, since 1884.

3. Walker writes that Charles Churchill, author of *The Rosciad* (1761), "shows the determination to say the sharpest thing he can think of. . . . while there is no evidence that he possessed any high degree of imagination, satire was his natural medium" (231).

4. Of Scottish poet William Dunbar (1460-1520), Walker claims, "With the exception of Chaucer no literary artist equal to Dunbar had hitherto written English" (28); Walker compares him to his contemporary John Skelton (ca. 1460-1529), adding that "while Dunbar is among the most polished of poets, Skelton is among the most uncouth" (32).

5. Walker argues that "*London* was an imitation. . . . But in *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, we feel the pulse of Johnson's thought from start to finish" (229-30).

6. From "The New Morality" (1798), by statesman and Prime Minister George Canning (1770-1827) (ll. 93-96, 107-10, 113-14); quoted in Walker, 248.

7. Walker suggests that Samuel Butler, author of *The Way of All Flesh* (1903), "stands clearly at the head of the satire of the later nineteenth century; but not in the first rank of satire, and still less in the first rank of literature. Swift, with whom his affinities are most obvious," he concludes, "is far superior in breadth of range, in force of thought, and in keenness of wit" (316). "A Voyage to the Country of the Houyhnhnms," criticized for its misanthropy, comprises part iv of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*.

An Italian Critic on Donne and Crashaw[1]

An unsigned review of *Secentismo e marinismo in Inghilterra: John Donne – Richard Crashaw*, by Mario Praz

Florence: La voce, 1925. Pp. xii + 294.

Times Literary Supplement, 1248 (17 Dec 1925) 878

If there be any fault to find with this book, it is with the title. Signor Praz's work is neither a general study of the poetry of the seventeenth century in England, nor is it by any means limited to the influence of Marino.[2] It is two books, independent but closely related; a study of the life and works of Donne, followed by a study of the life and works of Crashaw. When this is understood, we can give the book nothing but praise. It is an illustration – another is the *Balzac* of Curtius, and we may expect the *Walter Savage Landor* of Valéry Larbaud to make a third[3] – of the great benefits which foreign criticism and foreign scholarship can confer upon any literature. Indeed, the present volume, interesting as it may be for Italian readers, is still more interesting for us; it is indispensable for any student of this period and these authors.

Signor Praz has, it must be allowed, been happy in his choice of a period (and of two poets of that period) where Italian scholarship, backed by critical acumen and taste, operates at a particular advantage. In the case of Crashaw, the one of our poets who is the most deeply saturated in Italian and Spanish influences, the advantage is immediately evident. That Crashaw's poetry was much affected by the Italian poetry of his time, and that his thought and feeling were deeply affected by Spanish mysticism, is common knowledge; but few English critics can quote chapter and verse as effectively as Signor Praz. And as an Italian he is perhaps better fitted than most of our English critics to appreciate the enormous influence during the first half of the seventeenth century of the Society of Jesus. This influence was exerted upon English poetry in two ways: indirectly through the vast quantity of Jesuit poetry and *belles-lettres* then produced – much of which Crashaw, for one, certainly read.[4] The Jesuits of that time were perhaps the most intelligent body of politicians that has ever existed; it speaks ill for the intelligence of later political and religious bodies, or perhaps still worse

for the literacy and taste of later generations, that no similar attempt to capture the human mind through poetry and *belles-lettres* has ever been made. But there was, also, in England until the Great Rebellion, an active Romanising tendency in which the Jesuits took part. The section of Signor Praz's book which deals with Roman activity and with the extreme Right of the Anglican Church under Laud, with Crashaw's connexion with the retreat of Little Gidding and with the misfortunes of Peterhouse makes extremely good reading; and it suggests that there is ample material, for some patient Sainte-Beuve, for an extensive *Port-Royal* of English literature.[5]

Signor Praz's evidence of the close dependence of Crashaw upon Italy for his inspiration is all the more pointed by the high place which he assigns to this poet. He considers him not only a member of a type, but the most perfect illustration of that type. For Signor Praz the spirit of the time reaches its finest literary expression in Crashaw, whom he appears to admire more than he admires any of Crashaw's Italian predecessors and contemporaries. As Italy expressed the period supremely in architecture, in the Baroque, so Crashaw expresses the Baroque supremely in verse. "The Weeper" (which is a "string of pearls," a sequence of self-contained stanzas)[6] belongs to a form of verse much practised by the Jesuits, derivative from the Greek anthology, and is the finest example of this form; the St. Theresa of Crashaw is the most perfect expression in verse of the mysticism of the sixteenth century in Spain.[7] Such opinions, from an Italian critic of Signor Praz's standing, are of very great interest.

As to the religious feeling and religious thought of these poets, Signor Praz is also better qualified than any English critic to pronounce judgment. No one is more aware than he of the world of difference between the religion of the seventeenth century and that of the thirteenth. It is the difference between psychology and metaphysics. Here Signor Praz is able to supply what has been a conspicuous defect of English criticism of Donne: a comparison between Donne and the metaphysical poets of the age of Dante. This is a point upon which he touches lightly, and which we wish he might examine in greater detail. What Signor Praz performs with greater care, in his study of Donne, is a correction of some of the excesses of that scholarly and standard book, *Les Doctrines médiévales chez Donne* by Miss Mary Ramsay.[8] Miss Ramsay is inclined to class all philosophy earlier than 1500 as equally medieval, and to see in Donne, because his reading was chiefly in medieval lore and because of his apparent indifference to classical Roman literature, a man of medieval mind. Donne was certainly, in his

taste, less modern than Ascham. But we think that Signor Praz's view is nearer to accuracy: that Donne was medieval in his education and in his taste, but Renaissance in mind and in sensibility. We should go even further than that, and say that the very indiscriminate variety of Donne's reading is evidence of his modernity. A man who quotes Aquinas so little, and who appears so directly influenced by pseudo-Dyonisius, who turns to account indifferently doctrines Christian or heretical, Jewish or Arabic, would have been out of his place in the thirteenth century.[9]

Signor Praz translates passages of prose and verse from both his authors. Many of the poems are translated in full. It is notable how much more stoutly Donne survives translation into Italian than does the more feminine virtue of Crashaw.

NOTES

1. Composed circa 23 Nov, while TSE was in the French Alps preparing his Clark Lectures on metaphysical poetry; there he wrote to Mario Praz (1896-1982) that he was "about to review" the book and praised him for having "forestalled me on several points," including the critique of Mary Ramsay, the connection between Donne and Cavalcanti, and the importance of the English Jesuits: "All of these points had occurred to me, but you have spoken first" (*L2* 786). TSE drew upon Praz's book heavily in the Clark Lectures and placed it at the top of the reading list following the first lecture in Jan 1926 (623). Praz had recently finished his doctoral degree and begun teaching Italian studies at the University of Liverpool.

2. Giambattista Marino (1569-1625) was the foremost poet and dramatist of the Italian Baroque period and initiator of Marinism or "secentismo," a style characterized by the use of lavish conceits and ornate rhetoric modeled after his *La lira* and *L'Adone*.

3. Ernst Robert Curtius (1886-1956), professor of German at Marburg University, published his book-length study, *Balzac*, in 1923, shortly after an English version of his shorter essay on Balzac had appeared in the *Criterion* (Jan 1923). Larbaud informed TSE in Mar 1922 of his intention to write a book about Landor; TSE hoped that portions of the book might appear first in the *Criterion*, but Larbaud's project never came to fruition (*L2* 137).

4. Latin poems written by seventeenth-century Jesuit priests appeared in the *Parnassus Societatis Iesu* (1654), a compendium to which Praz refers in *Secentismo*.

5. Praz discusses William Laud (1573-1645), the Archbishop of Canterbury and leader of the High Anglican party, and his desire to bring the Church of England into conformity with Roman Catholicism. Crashaw was a regular visitor to the Anglican devotional community founded by Nicholas Ferrar at Little Gidding, which TSE later visited and wrote about in *Four Quartets*. Crashaw was also a Fellow at Peterhouse College, Cambridge, a stronghold of Laudian High-Churchmanship; the chapel at Peterhouse was desecrated in Dec 1643 and its fellows forced to take the Solemn League and Covenant, which Crashaw refused. *Port-Royal* is Sainte-Beuve's history of the seventeenth-century intellectual center at Port-Royal-des-Champs, near Paris.

6. Praz refers to the sequence of sestets in "Saint Mary Magdalene, or The Weeper" (1646), as "un rosario di epigrammi o di madrigali malamente legati assieme, senza sviluppo" (231) ["a rosary of epigrams or madrigals clumsily linked together, without progression"]. Trans. Praz, *The Flaming Heart: Essays on Crashaw, Machiavelli, and Other Studies in the Relations between Italian and English Literature from Chaucer to T. S. Eliot* (Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1966), 218.

7. Praz concludes his discussion of Crashaw's "A Hymn to the Name and Honour of the Admirable Saint Teresa" (1648): "non v'è in tutta la letteratura del Seicento espressione più alta di quello spiritualizzamento del senso che qui si compendia in un miracoloso e vertiginoso ascendere" (283) ["In the whole course of seventeenth-century literature there is no higher expression of that spiritualisation of sense which is condensed here in a portentous, dizzy soaring of red-hot images"]. *Flaming Heart*, 262.

8. Mary Paton Ramsay (1885-1967) studied at Aberdeen with H. J. C. Grierson, upon whose recommendation she later undertook the writing of *Les Doctrines médiévales chez Donne, le poète métaphysicien de l'Angleterre (1573-1631)* (1917) as a doctoral dissertation at the University of Paris. TSE discusses Ramsay's book and criticizes her thesis throughout the second of his Clark lectures (628).

9. Dominican philosopher and theologian St. Thomas Aquinas (ca. 1225-74), author of the *Summa theologiae*; TSE expands upon the influence of the sixth-century mystical theologian, Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite (also Pseudo-Dionysius), author of *The Celestial Hierarchies* and *The Divine Names*, in his second Clark lecture.

Shakespeare and Montaigne

An unsigned review of *Shakspeare's Debt to Montaigne* by George Coffin Taylor

London: Milford, 1925. Pp. vi + 66.

Times Literary Supplement, 1249 (24 Dec 1925) 895

Professor Taylor has written a useful book.[1] He has shown wisdom in presenting his conclusions in the briefest and most compact form – the whole treatise, including appendices, runs only to sixty-six pages – and his appendices exhibit his evidence in a manner most convenient for the reader. In general, he is in accord with Mr. J. M. Robertson's views on the subject of Shakespeare's relation to Montaigne;[2] but his own methods are of considerable interest, and his modesty and caution in limiting the scope of his inquiry give them added plausibility.

Mr. Taylor confines himself, and rightly, to determining the extent of *verbal* influence. His method is simple but persuasive. First he brings to light a number of fresh parallel passages of Florio's translation with passages in plays written after 1603 (the date of Florio's publication).[3] He does not rely on any one of the Shakespeare passages as obviously derived from Montaigne – though several of the parallels are to an unprejudiced mind quite convincing – but contends that the number of the parallels is sufficient to establish a strong probability that Shakespeare had the Florio Montaigne much in his mind, especially in the years immediately following 1603 – the later plays show fewer parallels. These parallels themselves are very interesting reading. But this mass of evidence is supported by evidence of another type, the presentation of which is Professor Taylor's most important contribution. Mr. Taylor has compiled a list of words and phrases which are found in the Florio, and which were used by Shakespeare after Florio's book appeared and not before; words and phrases numerous enough to create a presumption that Shakespeare picked them up from Florio. Furthermore, Mr. Taylor has drawn up a table showing the number of such words and phrases occurring in each play, and the percentage to each page: with the highly satisfactory result that (with two exceptions) the highest percentage is found in the plays written about or soon after

1603; from this date they decrease steadily, as, it would seem, the detailed impressions of the Florio faded from Shakespeare's mind. Of the two exceptions, Mr. Taylor admits that "the strong influence in *The Tempest* is inexplicable, except on the theory that Shakespeare returned for a brief interval to his reading of Montaigne" [32]. This hypothesis may look rather weak, but we think there is a great deal to he said for it. There is no doubt that *The Tempest* is a very late play, and it is the one play in which the influence of Montaigne is commonly acknowledged. As for *Othello*, in which the influence of Montaigne ought, on the theory, to be strong (the table shows a percentage of only 2.2 Montaigne words to the page, compared, for instance, with 2.8 in *The Winter's Tale*), we think that Mr. Taylor should have expounded his explanation at greater length.

But, in any case, Mr. Taylor attempts no more than to found a presumption; and in this we think he succeeds. As to the nature of the influence of Montaigne on Shakespeare he is wisely reserved. At most, a large part must be conceded to Florio himself – and here Mr. Taylor renders a needed tribute to the work performed by the Elizabethan translators in enriching the language. Florio was compelled

> to draw upon every available source of word-supply in our language, and, when that supply was exhausted, to press into service foreign emissaries, words new and never spoken before in England. No one who will take the pains to read carefully two or three times through the Florio will doubt the vastness of the vocabulary. Let one cast about in one's mind for a source of available word-supply which could, about 1603, afford Shakspere an opportunity for sudden expansion in vocabulary, and one will come at last to the Florio Montaigne. [29]

Even, Mr. Taylor adds, if we allow that Shakespeare may have got many of the words from other sources, such as the North Plutarch, or if Florio and Shakespeare were drawing on common sources, the evidence that Shakespeare read with the most prodigious memory for words that has ever existed is almost indisputable, and is consonant with everything that we do know of Shakespeare.[4] And in bringing more clearly to light this *verbal* influence Mr. Taylor supplies a corrective to the invariable human impulse to look for mystery and excitement. For certainly it was not the influence of one philosopher on another. As Mr. Taylor reminds us, no two critics can agree as to what Shakespeare's "philosophy" was – if he had one – and we need only recall such extreme limits of opinion as the views of Mr. Santayana

and Mr. Middleton Murry.[5] Montaigne is just the sort of writer to provide a stimulant to a poet; for what the poet looks for in his reading is not a philosophy – not a body of doctrine or even a consistent point of view which he endeavours to *understand* – but a point of departure. The attitude of the *craftsman* like Shakespeare – whose business was to write plays, not to think – is very different from that of the philosopher or even the literary critic.

Not that Montaigne did not influence Shakespeare in ways which we can never know. Mr. Taylor does not deny the existence of some deeper influence than an influence of vocabulary. But he refrains – and for this abstention must be given all praise – from attempting to plumb these depths. There was almost certainly some emotional influence. The characteristics of that mysterious and horrifying group of plays which includes *Hamlet* as well as *Measure for Measure* and *Troilus* must, we feel, owe something to Montaigne. But what and how much we shall never know. It is not only the external history of Shakespeare's life that is deficient, it is that internal history, which may have much or may have little relation to the external facts, that internal crisis over which our imagination is tempted to brood too long – it is this that we shall never know.

NOTES

1. George Coffin Taylor (1877-1961), professor of English at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

2. Robertson discusses Shakespeare's extensive debt to Montaigne in *Montaigne and Shakspere* (1897), which TSE read while he was preparing to write "Hamlet" (122). Taylor refers to Robertson's work as "especially worthy of notice" in the preface (v).

3. The first English translation of Montaigne's *Essays*, by John Florio.

4. Taylor admits: "it is certain that both Shakspere and Montaigne drank deep and often of Plutarch," and that "Shakspere and Florio were, moreover, doubtless reading the same books, or talking with the same literary people" (6).

5. TSE refers to the diametrically opposed views in Santayana's "The Absence of Religion in Shakespeare" (1896) and John Middleton Murry's "Literature and Religion" (in *To the Unknown God*, 1924), which likens Shakespeare to Christ for his prophetic discovery of a true religion beyond the Church.

Wanley and Chapman

An unsigned review of *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association*, vol. XI, collected by Oliver Elton

London: Milford, 1925. Pp. 169.[1]

Times Literary Supplement, 1250 (31 Dec 1925) 907

If one misses the names of the greater humanists who have given special distinction to the earlier volumes of this series – Mr. Saintsbury, for instance, is absent, and W. P. Ker and Henry Bradley will be here no more – yet there is none of these six essays which was not worth the collecting and which is not worth the reading.[2] The level is maintained. The essays are scholarly, modest and cautious in generalization; they all provide at least the material for some valuable piece of literary criticism. Mr. Wyld's "Diction and Imagery in Anglo-Saxon Poetry" is an intelligent and meritorious attempt to educate opinion on that very much neglected part of our literature – neglected, that is, by the general literary critic.[3] Miss Birkhead accumulates instructive information on "Sentiment and Sensibility in the Eighteenth-Century Novel," which should be pondered by those who are tempted to exaggerate the virtues of that century.[4] Mr. Routh's essay on medieval vision literature is amazingly documented, and is useful for any student of those centuries;[5] but his learning seems too exclusively literary for an era which was primarily theological, witness his remark:

> with the advent of the Dark Ages humanists and visionaries returned to this immemorial tradition of wretchedness and degeneracy, and as men always seek to visualize their despondencies no less than their enthusiasms, they established and developed the doctrine of original sin, [124-25]

which as an account of the origin of this doctrine is at least incomplete. There are two papers which call for more extended notice: Mr. L. C. Martin's "Forgotten Poet of the Seventeenth Century" and Miss Janet Spens's "Chapman's Ethical Thought."[6]

The Reverend Nathaniel Wanley was born in 1634, became an M. A. of Trinity College, Cambridge, and died in 1680 at Coventry, where he was

Vicar of Holy Trinity. One of his poems, "The Invitation," appears in Mr. H. J. Massingham's *Treasury of Seventeenth-Century Verse*; but it is Mr. Robin Flower of the British Museum, Mr. Martin tells us, who discovered the authorship of the manuscript *Scintillulae Sacrae*.[7] Of the authorship of these poems there now seems to be very little possibility of doubt. In Mr. Martin's essay several poems are given in full. The more lyrical pieces – of which, to judge by this selection, Mr. Massingham's choice is the best, though we do not suppose that Mr. Massingham had seen any of the others – are, as Mr. Martin says, very distinctly influenced by Vaughan, and some of them are almost as good as Vaughan in his less inspired moments. In an age when the technique and content of lyrical verse were so well standardized, it is not surprising to find such excellences. What surprises us more is the excellence of the two poems in heroic couplets. The long "Witch of Endor" is a well-sustained version of Saul's visit, and of his subsequent death, which in itself is enough to make this volume of English Studies worth possessing.[8] "The Resurrection," a shorter piece, is very pleasing, and has, we think, a greater individuality than any of the devotional lyrics. It may be observed that Mr. Wanley, like some contemporary poets, is very sparing in punctuation:

Can death be faithfull or the Grave be just
Or shall my tombe restore my scattred dust
Shall ev'ry haire find out its proper pore
And crumbled bones be joined as before
Shall long-unpractis'd pulses learne to beate
Victorious rottennesse a loud retreate
Or eyes ecclipsed with a tedious night
May they once hope to resalute the light
What if this flesh of mine be made the prey
Of scaly Pirates Caniballs at sea
Shall living Sepulchres give up there dead
Or is not flesh made fish then perished
What if the working of a subtile flame
By an unkind embrace dissolve this frame
To ashes; and the whistling winds convey
Each atome to a quite contrary way
Shall the small Pilgrims that perhapps may passe

From grasse to flesh and thence from flesh to grasse
Travell untill they meet and then embrace
So strictly as to grow the former face? [12]

Mr. Wanley, by the way, was apparently much interested in the problems of resurrection. In a prose book, *The Wonders of the Little World* – a sort of Burtonian collection of odds and ends, there is a note on "Parcel [partial] Resurrection" which is so good that we cannot forbear to quote it after Mr. Martin:

> This Parcel Resurecction of Legs and Arms Etc. useth to be seen and believed upon Good Friday [i. e., near "Gran Cairo"] and the Eve of that, saith Mr. *Gregory*, and then adds out of *Simon Goulartius*, from the relation of one *Stephen du Plais* an eye-witness, and a man of very good and sober note in his acknowledgement. And he told me moreover that he had (and that others had done so too) touched divers of these rising members. And as he was once so doing upon the hairy head of a child, a man of *Cairo* cryed out aloud, *Kali, kali ante materasde*, that is to say, *Hold, hold, you know not what you do*.[9]

It is to be hoped that we may have an edition not only of Mr. Wanley's *Scintillulae Sacrae* and other poems, but of his *Wonders of the Little World*.

Miss Spens's essay on "Chapman's Ethical Thought" has value both because it calls attention to a part of Chapman's work which has always been ignored – for we believe that only his plays and his Homer are much read – and because she recognizes our ignorance of the mind of Chapman's time. She observes truly

> the inner life of the age of Elizabeth, only three centuries distant, and the experience of men of our own race, is far less intelligible to us . . . we do not understand how a true Elizabethan felt in the inner chambers of his heart. Shakespeare is of little use to us as an interpreter, partly because of his universality, partly because he is curiously silent on some subjects. [145]

The Renaissance, and perhaps particularly the Elizabethan Renaissance, is certainly one of the most difficult periods to understand. In no other period do we venture on such bold generalizations from such partial bases. Philosophical and religious prejudices – for or against the "middle ages"

– play their part in the misunderstanding. And in what is essentially a period of transition, no generalization can order the whole mass of material; indeed we might almost say that no generalization can apply exactly even to the work and personalities of any two men. And the views of the literary critics on the English Renaissance are apt to be limited by the overwhelming literary importance in the Elizabethan age of our drama; by the work, that is to say, of a special group of men who were not, either in education or in their interests, altogether typical of the period as a whole. Consequently the first half of the seventeenth century, which we see from another point of view than the dramatic, sometimes appears to us less "modern" than the late sixteenth. But it is not so.

In Chapman we have a dramatist by accident, who was a poet and a man of thought as well as a scholar. Ideas, and the "sensibility" of thought, meant more to Chapman than to any of his contemporary dramatists; he was much more an "intellectual" than Ben Jonson, and in his way far more a mystic than any. He is a precursor of the metaphysicals. Chapman himself is mixed; his classical stoicism is crossed with a strain – perhaps out of Marsilio Ficino and similar writers – of otherworldliness; resulting, here and there in his tragedies, in a sense of double significance which gives him here and there a curious resemblance to Dostoevsky.[10] The analysis and the embryology of this strange fusion of Roman stoicism – which had, undoubtedly, its mystical possibilities – with the diffused hermetic and "Areopagitic" moods of the time would be an interesting and difficult problem.[11] And how much did Chapman know about Machiavelli? It was a time when anything might join with almost anything else to produce strange and sometimes beautiful offspring. Miss Spens brings some useful suggestions for anyone who is interested in these questions. She admits, of course, the influence of Seneca's and Plutarch's moral discourses, suggests that Chapman was also affected by Aristotle's Ethics and by the *Hermetica* (which it is just possible he may have seen in the Latin translation of Ficino), but lays greatest emphasis on Cicero's *De Officiis*.[12] In a valuable analysis of the characteristics of Chapman's heroes (Bussy, Clermont, Biron) she makes a contribution to the study of the rise and development of hero-worship, which might, we think, be traced with profit down to Carlyle and Emerson, and finally to Romain Rolland.[13] But the part of Miss Spens's essay which we particularly recommend is that dealing with Chapman's long, obscure and very beautiful poems, *Ovid's Banquet of Sense* and *The Shadow of Night*.[14]

NOTES

1. The English Association was founded in 1906 and began publishing *Essays and Studies* annually in 1910. The editor of the present volume, Oliver Elton (1861-1945), was King Alfred Professor of English at the University of Liverpool and author of the six-volume *A Survey of English Literature*. TSE contributed "A Note on the Verse of John Milton" (later retitled "Milton I," in *OPP* 156) to vol 21 of *Essays and Studies* in 1936.

2. George Saintsbury and the late W. P. Ker and Henry Bradley (1845-1923), an editor of *Oxford English Dictionary*, all published essays in the inaugural volume.

3. Henry Wyld (1870-1945), philologist and Merton Professor of English Language and Literature at Oxford since 1920.

4. Edith Birkhead (1889-1951), senior lecturer at the University of Bristol and author of *The Tale of Terror: A Study of the Gothic Romance* (1921).

5. H. V. Routh (1878-1951), reader in English at University of London.

6. L. C. Martin (1866-1976), editor of *The Works of Henry Vaughan* (1914) and lecturer at the University of Lund, Sweden; Janet Spens (1876-1963), author of *Elizabethan Drama* (1922) and fellow at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford.

7. H. J. Massingham (1888-1952) edited *A Treasury of Seventeenth Century Verse from the Death of Shakespeare to the Restoration* (London: Macmillan, 1919), in which Wanley's "The Invitation" appears anonymously (275). Martin discusses Massingham's source in "Forgotten Poet" (5). Scholar of Irish literature Robin Flower (1881-1946) was an assistant and later deputy keeper in the Department of Manuscripts at the British Museum. The *Scintillulae Sacrae* (ca. 1655-67) of Nathaniel Wanley (1634-80) comprises some thirty devotional lyrics.

8. Wanley's poem recounts the biblical narrative in Samuel 28:3-25, in which King Saul bids the witch or medium of Endor to summon the spirit of the dead prophet Samuel, who foretells Saul's death in battle shortly thereafter.

9. TSE's brackets; Martin quotes from Book VIII, chapter xxxviii, "Of entombed bodies . . . and of the parcel Resurrection near Gran Cairo," in Wanley's *The Wonders of the Little World; or, A General History of Man, in Six Books* (1678), a compendium of observations and curiosities that TSE compares to Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621).

10. TSE discussed this doubleness and Chapman's relation to Dostoevsky in "A Neglected Aspect of Chapman" (548). Marsilio Ficino (1433-99), author of *Theologia platonica* [Platonic Theology] (1482), was one of the foremost humanists and neoplatonist philosophers of the Renaissance.

11. "Areopagitic" refers to the thought of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, a sixth-century Christian philosopher whose combination of Neoplatonism and mystical theology in such works as *Celestial Hierarchies* influenced Chapman by way of sixteenth-century Latin translations by John Colet and others.

12. Spens refers to the moral essays of Seneca and to the moral precepts in the *Lives* and *Moralia* of Plutarch (ca. 45-120 AD) (147). She discusses the influence of the *Hermetica* or *Corpus Hermeticum*, a compilation of mystical works attributed to Hermes Trismegistus and translated into Latin by, among others, Marsilio Ficino in 1471. And she calls Cicero's *De officiis* [On Duties] (44 BC) "the most influential book of all" for the formation of Renaissance ethical ideals (147).

13. Bussy and Clermont are the protagonists of Chapman's *Bussy D'Ambois* and *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois*, respectively; Byron (the Duc de Biron) is the hero of his two-part play, *The Conspiracy and Tragedy of Charles, Duke of Byron*. On the subject of hero-worship, Thomas Carlyle wrote *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* (1841), Emerson, *Representative Men* (1850), and the Nobel Prize–winning playwright Romain Rolland (1866-1944), *L'Humble Vie héroïque* [The Humble Life of the Hero] (1912).

14. Chapman's first published work, *The Shadow of Night*, appeared in 1594, his burlesque narrative, *Ovid's Banquet of Sense*, the following year.

THE CLARK LECTURES

LECTURES ON THE METAPHYSICAL POETRY OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO DONNE, CRASHAW AND COWLEY

> Madonna, lo fine del mio amore fu già il saluto di questa donna, forse de cui voi intendete; ed in quello dimorava la beatitudine, ch'e il fine di tutti li miei desiri.
>
> *La Vita Nuova*[1]

> I want someone to treat me rough.
> Give me a cabman.
>
> Popular Song[2]

[AUTHOR'S PREFACE][3]

It is the intention of the author to rewrite these lectures as a book. Beyond the obvious alterations – the conversational style and the constant repetitions to be removed – the whole argument is to be reformed; assertions must be proved; much detail of fact and authority must be added. The divers parts must be made more coherent; I am aware that in the present form my fundamental ideas remain quite obscure. In particular, the whole of my case turns upon my interpretation of the *Vita Nuova*, which is only hinted at in Lecture III, and my interpretation of the childhood of Dante. This must be developed very fully.

The completed book on The School of Donne will be very much longer than these lectures, and will include detailed examination of the work of other poets of the epoch who have here been only casually mentioned. It is intended as one volume of a trilogy under the general title of "The Disintegration of the Intellect": the other two volumes will deal with Elizabethan Drama, its technical development, its versification, and its intellectual background of general ideas; and with The Sons of Ben – the development of humanism, its relation to Anglican thought, and the emergence of Hobbes and Hyde. The three together will constitute a criticism of the English Renaissance.

Lecture I

Introduction: On the Definition of Metaphysical Poetry

My purpose in these lectures is to arrive if possible at a systematic description of the common characteristics of the poetry of the Seventeenth Century in England commonly known as metaphysical, and further to seek for a definition of the nature of metaphysical poetry in general. It suits my purpose if the subject has, as I believe it has, a certain actuality and contemporary bearing. We have seen in the present century and increasingly within the last few years, an awakening of interest in this seventeenth-century poetry. However this arose, it undoubtedly contains besides pure literary appreciation, a consciousness or a belief that this poetry and this age have some peculiar affinity with our own poetry and our own age, a belief that our own mentality and feelings are better expressed by the seventeenth century than by the nineteenth or even the eighteenth. Donne is more frequently used as a critical measure than ever before.[4†] Contemporary poets are by their admirers likened to Donne or to Crashaw; some of them no doubt study these writers deliberately and elect to receive their influence; there are not wanting voices to declare that the present age is a metaphysical age.

This actuality of the subject does not merely make it fashionable; it is a subject upon which it is vital to have clear and distinct ideas. If the likeness exists, then it is valuable to understand the poetry of the seventeenth century, in order that we may understand that of our own time and understand ourselves.

If the likeness is only fancied, then it is worth the trouble to clear up the misconception, for the same reason. And if as is antecedently probable, the likeness exists in certain particulars along with utter dissimilarity in other particulars, then it will still more usefully clear up our notions about the seventeenth century and our own, if we can arrive at a proper analysis. It may reveal to us tendencies and attitudes in ourselves and our age of which we were conscious and which we must make up our minds either to forward or oppose. But in any case we should be able to find good reasons for our likes and dislikes in this age or any other.

And here it is necessary for me to point out, both in guidance towards the method to be adopted and in common modesty, that these lectures will

not continue or develop the work of scholarship. I shall make use, with due sense of obligation, of the work of scholars, such as Mr. Saintsbury and Mr. Grierson, who have done so much to make the material available and to make possible a proper understanding of it.[5] But my point of view is not that of scholarship, but that of literary criticism, and particularly that of one type of literary criticism. My attitude is that of a craftsman who has attempted for eighteen years to make English verses, studying the work of dead artisans who have made better verses.[6] The interest of a craftsman is centred in the present and the immediate future: he studies the literature of the past in order to learn how he should write in the present and the immediate future; and no matter how profound and disinterested his studies, they will always so to speak come out at the finger tips, and find their completion in the action of the chisel, the brush or the typewriter.

What I have just said is really a reservation: for the difference between the two kinds of pure literary criticism is more evident in the defects and limitations of individual critics than it is in theory. You can distinguish but you cannot dissect; the end of criticism is both practical and theoretic. The speculative critic refines and intellectualises our enjoyment, heightens, not destroys, the keenness of our immediate and irreflective apprehension; establishes standards which create a demand for the highest form of art, and so affects production. And the artisan critic, whose aim is production and novelty, production of the best possible, and novelty because we can only capture the enduring by perpetual movement and adaptation, must also adopt disinterestedness in the pursuit of such kind of truth as exists in his material. My interest in enquiring after a definition of metaphysical poetry is that I wish to know what value the term "metaphysical" as applied to verse can have for the present day; whether it is a will-of-the-wisp formed by the combustion of confused and irreconcilable ideas, or whether it represents a legitimate and possible ideal. And now, as Mr. George Herbert would say, let us tune our instruments.[7]

I am of opinion that the failure to arrive at a satisfactory definition of metaphysical poetry – and we shall presently examine two or three definitions of this poetry and some of its elements – is due to a preliminary misconception of the nature of the problem. As a consequence, most of the definitions have destroyed that which they attempted to define. We have on the one hand an idea, or a term which by being a term claims to represent some idea; and on the other hand we have a considerable mass of literature which appears to embody this idea. Nothing, at first sight, more

easy. We have only to evolve from our insides a definition of what metaphysical poetry must be, then apply it, separate the metaphysical authors from the non-metaphysical, and if we are inclined to be a little more analytical, the metaphysical from the non-metaphysical portions and passages of their works. But consider the idea and the material more closely. This term "metaphysical," used by Dryden, adopted by Johnson, was first used as a convenient term, and as much defined by the material in hand, as defining it.[8] It was used by persons who were not themselves metaphysicians, or of a philosophical cast of mind, and they certainly did not employ the term with any thought of Lucretius or Dante in their heads. The more metaphysical branches of philosophy were neither much practised, nor in high repute in England, either in the age of Dryden or in the age of Johnson. Incidentally, there is room to examine whether the meaning of the term had not somewhat altered between Dryden and Johnson. We have first therefore to consider how much community of intension may be found between the term as thus used and the term as we can use it; whether the term can be retained at all for the poets to whom it was originally applied. Second, we must remember that we use the term not only for a larger number of poets than did Dryden or Johnson, but also for these poets seen in a different order. Both these differences are important. We stretch the term to include virtually all of the poets flourishing under James I and Charles I who can be called lyric poets (though we include many who were not). There is no evidence that Johnson had in mind, or would have included, or would have thought worthy to include, many poets who seem to us to belong more or less to this category: Crashaw, Marvell, Lovelace, King, George and Edward Herbert, Vaughan, Carew, Stanley, Benlowes, Chamberlayne and of course Traherne pass unmentioned.[9] Johnson is indeed far from giving satisfaction: he speaks of Donne and of Ben Jonson as setting the fashion (he makes a vague allusion to Marino) and enumerates as their "immediate successors" who still possessed some shreds of honour in his own time, Suckling, Waller, Denham, Cowley, Cleveland and Milton. Waller, Denham and Milton he presents only to withdraw instantly: Suckling he dismisses as negligible; there remain only Cowley and Cleveland, and these two, with Donne, are the poets from whose work he draws all the illustrations for his famous essay.[10] And remember that he attaches a higher absolute value to the work of Cowley than to the work of Donne. Dryden, in his "Preface to *Sylvae*," refers to Cowley with what seems to us unmeasured praises; and in his references to Donne, appears

more impressed by the Satires, than by any other portion of that poet's work.[11]

It will be seen, accordingly, that the invention and use of the term "metaphysical poetry" springs from what for us is hardly better than an accident. To this race of authors, Dryden and Johnson, neither fully qualified to judge, conceded profundity of thought and learning; and thought and learning, dressed in outlandish and difficult imagery, seemed to Johnson metaphysical. His description is perfectly just, and his criticism both legitimate and felicitous, when measured by the sort of passage which he quotes; but on the whole his use of our term is rather libellous of metaphysics, than illuminating of his authors. And these qualities which seemed to Johnson to make Donne and Cowley metaphysical are themselves attributes which we must call into question: we shall scrutinise sceptically both the profundity of their thought, and the quality of their learning.

At this point we inevitably say to ourselves: let us then make a fresh start. It is possible that the designation may be a complete misnomer. Let us then begin with those poets whom we can agree to be *echt metaphysisch*,[12] disengage the essential metaphysical quality from their work, and apply it in the form of a definition to Donne and his fellows. They may prove to be more or less metaphysical, or not at all; in the latter event we will find a new name for them. You can make the term "metaphysical" equivalent to Mr. Santayana's term "philosophical" in his book *Three Philosophical Poets*. This book, too little read, though one of the most brilliant of Mr. Santayana's works, consists of studies of Lucretius, Dante and Goethe. It is clear that for Mr. Santayana a philosophical poet is one with a scheme of the universe, who embodies that scheme in verse, and essays to realise his conception of man's part and place in the universe. This is not the place for a full consideration of Mr. Santayana's point of view or of his arguments. I will only say this much. If you identify "metaphysical" with "philosophical" and limit "philosophical" to those poets who have given expression to a system or some view of the universe, and man's place in it, which has some philosophical equivalent – as Epicurus, Aquinas, or, for Goethe [the Faust legend],[13] which expresses half the philosophy of Europe from his own time to William James – then the distinction is perfectly clear. Mr. Santayana's three will exhaust the list of metaphysical poets. But I think that the effect of Mr. Santayana's book is a little too clearly to *trancher les genres*.[14] As a philosopher, he is more interested in poetical philosophy than in philosophical poetry. This stricture needs one qualification. I think

that Mr. Santayana and myself have this common ground, that we do not mean by philosophical poetry that poetry which is given the sort of interpretation which is called "occult" – the term "occult," it must be remembered, includes a wide range of types from the *Sortes Virgilianae* to certain interpretations of Shakespeare and Blake.[15] We have both, I imagine, a prejudice in favour of the clear and distinct; we mean a philosophy which is expressed, not one which is inexpressible.

I have no concern to attack any critic who finds in any poet an occult philosophy; nor to attack any poet who chooses to make his verse the medium for conveying it; but its connexion with the poetry seems to me of no literary interest, whereas the connexion of the thought of Epicurus with the verse of Lucretius, or the thought of Aquinas with the verse of Dante, seems to me of very considerable literary importance. And I should agree with Mr. Santayana that Shakespeare is not a philosophical poet. But at this point I must offer, in distinction to Mr. Santayana's poets of complete systems, and on the other hand in distinction to the champions of the poetry of occult significance, a humble tentative account of the nature of philosophical poetry. It must be, a priori, an account which will include Dante and Lucretius, whom we take to be philosophical by immediate inspection and common consent. And it must be an account which will not include all good poetry, for that would be an absurdity. And it must proceed from the side of poetry, not from the side of philosophy. That is to say, we must restrict it to poetical work of the first intensity, work in which the thought is so to speak fused into poetry at a very high temperature. Consequently we must leave out of account those works, even very fine works, such as Pope's "Essay on Man," in which the blend is effected at a lower temperature, and those such as Blake's in which we are not certain that it takes place at all.

It is a function of poetry both to fix and make more conscious and precise emotions and feelings in which most people participate in their own experience, and to draw within the orbit of feeling and sense what had existed only in thought. It creates a unity of feeling out of various parts: a unity of action, which is epic or dramatic; a union (the simplest form) of sound and sense, the pure lyric; and in various forms, the union of things hitherto unconnected in experience. You will see that Sappho's great ode, for instance, is a real advance, a development, in human consciousness; it sets down, within its verse, the unity of an experience which had previously existed only unconsciously; in recording the physical concomitants of an

emotion it modifies the emotion.[16] When Catullus suddenly turns with the immense meditation:

soles occidere et redire possunt
sed nobis . . .[17]

he is modifying an emotion by a thought and a thought by an emotion; integrating them into a new emotion, an emotion which with all its variations of subsequent poets, has been experienced, doubtless, by many generations of lovers. Not that I suggest that the history of human emotion has been a steady accumulation, a progress onward and upward due to the united efforts of poets all pulling together. Not at all. Many feelings have to be abandoned, many are mislaid, many are corrupted, some seem to have disappeared, like the lost Atlantis, forever. What is left behind, the empty shell of a vanished unity of feeling, is usually called Literature.

Well! it can hardly be doubted that in any period all the poets have a [feeling] more or less in common – not from any co-operative zeal, but like the two characters in *The Hunting of the Snark*, who purely

from necessity, not from good will,
Marched along shoulder to shoulder.[18]

In our time, when there are more social circles than there were circles in Dante's *Inferno*, when there are more philosophies, complete, incomplete, and inchoate, than there were builders at Babel, more theories, more tastes, when physical communication between nations is almost perfect, and intellectual communication almost extinct, it is more difficult, certainly, to find a common denominator; but it can be found; for as genius tends towards unity, so mediocrity tends toward uniformity. But it is obvious that in certain periods the revolution of the sphere of thought will so to speak throw off ideas which will fall within the attraction of poetry, and which the operation of poetry will transmute into the immediacy of feeling. It is these moments of history when human sensibility is momentarily enlarged in certain directions to be defined, that I propose to call the metaphysical periods. Obviously, this statement needs a good deal of elucidation.

There are three principal forms in which thought can invest itself and become poetry. One is when a thought, which may be and most often is a commonplace ("rien de plus beau que les lieux communs" said Baudelaire)[19] is expressed in poetic form though in the language of thought. When Shakespeare says

Man must abide
His going hence, even as his coming hither;
Ripeness is all,[20]

it illustrates this type. Such gnomic utterances occur very frequently in drama, where they gain a great deal of their force from the position which they occupy and the light which they cast on the dramatic action: the Greek choruses are full of them. The second type is the discursive exposition of an argument, such as we find in the "Essay on Man," and at its highest, in the passages in the *Purgatorio* expounding the Thomist-Aristotelian theory of the origin and development of the soul.[21] Immense technical skill is necessary to make such discourse fly, and great emotional intensity is necessary to make it soar. And the third type is that which occurs when an idea, or what is only ordinarily apprehensible as an intellectual statement, is translated in sensible form; so that the world of sense is actually enlarged. An illustration. One of the capital ideas of Donne, the one which is perhaps his peculiar gift to humanity, is that of the union, the fusion and identification of souls in sexual love. To state it, to deposit it gnomically or to analyse it is nothing; to express it, to evoke it, is everything. It is hardly a thought at all; it differs radically from the two types mentioned a moment ago: but how many centuries of intellectual labour were necessary, how much dogma, how much speculation, how many systems had to be elaborated, shattered and taken up into other systems, before such an idea was possible! The soul itself had to be constructed first: and since the soul has disappeared we have many other things, the analysis of Stendhal, the madness of Dostoevski, but not this. Even Browning, who might have been a more philosophical poet had he been more of a philosopher, gives us only

Infinite passion, and the pain
Of finite hearts that yearn.[22]

It becomes clear after a little inspection that this type of thought, the Word made Flesh, so to speak, is more restricted in the times and places of its avatar than is immediately evident. It is one form of an enlargement of immediate experience which, in one form or another, is a general function of poetry.[23] Examples might be multiplied. There are those which I gave, from Sappho and Catullus. When Helen looks out from Troy, and thinks she sees[24] her brothers in the host, and Homer tells us that they were already dead, we partake at the same time of her feelings and of those of an

omniscient witness, and the two form one.[25] But the characteristic of the type of poetry I am trying to define is that it elevates sense for a moment to regions ordinarily attainable only by abstract thought, or on the other hand clothes the abstract, for a moment, with all the painful delight of flesh. To call it mystical is facile, and I hasten to discountenance the use of this word; for there are many kinds of qualities of mysticism, and I wish to emphasise the intellectual quality of this operation of poetry. With the more intellectual forms of mysticism, the *beatitudo*, or the experience of Theresa or John of the Cross, it may come in contact, as we shall see;[26] but as this is a specific variation, and the generic character is not mystical at all, I prefer to keep the word mysticism out of the way.

Such poetry, though it may find a partial gospel in the *Banquet* of Plato (a work which influenced Donne indirectly through neo-platonism),[27] finds no place in the ancient world. To account for its absence would require a summary of the history of thought from classical antiquity to the thirteenth century; and as I think that the assertion will in the course of these lectures gradually reveal itself to you as true, I shall make no direct attempt to explain why it is true. The first distinguished exemplar of this type of poetry was of course Dante. If you recall my tentative division of the three types of philosophical poetry, you will see at once that Dante is the great exemplar not only for the type which forms the theme of these lectures, but of every type. I quoted from *King Lear*:

> Man must abide
> His going hence, even as his coming hither . . .

alongside of which may be set the familiar

> Nessun maggior dolore
> Che di ricordar del tempo felice
> Nella miseria . . . . .[28]

Of the expository type I have already instanced Dante's account of the soul in the *Purgatorio*:

> Uscio di Dio. . . . .
> L'anima semplicetta, che sa nulle. . . . .[29]

The third type is found throughout the *Vita Nuova* (to which I shall return) in one form, and in various places in the *Divine Comedy* in other forms. In the last canto of the *Paradiso*:

La forma universal' di questo nodo
Credi ch'io vidi, perchè più di largo
Dicendo questo, mi sentii ch'io godo.

Un punto solo m'è maggior letargo
Che venticinque secoli all'impresa
Che fe Nettuno ammirar l'ombra d'Argo.[30]

I shall ask you to remark, here and later, how Dante always finds the sensuous equivalent, the physical embodiment, for the realisation of the most tenuous and refined intensity (I say "tenuous intensity" not without forethought) of experience: it is as if his body were capable of maintaining life and consciousness – not only maintaining but indeed increasing it, for the last cantos of his poem are the most passionate – at a higher altitude and in a more rarified atmosphere than those of other men.

In turning from Dante (of course I must recur to him later) I do not wish to leave you under the impression that this gift of what I am going to call metaphysical poetry is his only or his supreme gift. I do not choose to assign precedence among his qualities. He had, as I said, all the possible qualities which could adorn a philosophical poet. And it is not, I imagine, any of these three – the gift of magnificent sentences, the gift of exposition, or the gift of incarnation – which chiefly arrests the mind of Mr. Santayana, but rather that architectonic ability, that power of organisation and structure, in which Dante excelled every poet who has ever written.

But Dante was not the only poet of his time. And the poetic power which I am attempting to define is precisely the one which is shared most fully by his contemporaries. His group all had this power, in various degrees, of fusing sense with thought: and in the smaller works of smaller men it is perhaps more clearly perceived than in the complete and immense structure of the master. I propose, therefore, in the course of my future lectures, to draw parallels and comparisons between Donne and his group on the one hand and Guido Guinizelli, Guido Cavalcanti, Cino da Pistoia on the other.[31] In the general parallel I pretend no discovery: indeed, I wonder only that every critic of Donne has not drawn the comparison. It was left for an Italian critic, Signor Mario Praz, in a book which appeared only last year, *Secentismo e Marinismo in Inghilterra*, to confer a poem of Donne's with one of Guinizelli's, and to point to the general resemblance; but I shall draw from the resemblance some general inferences for which I shall not hold Signor Praz responsible.[32]

We then ask whether these two periods – the *Trecento* in Italy and the Seventeenth Century in England, are the only periods in which this type of poetry is to be found. Certainly not. It is found, in various degrees of adulteration, indefinitely after Dante. There are traces before Donne and after. But I propose to cut my periods off more sharply for my purpose than one would be justified in doing were one composing a continuous history. I wish to show the type in its most typical form. And there is this consideration: that the study of derivation and influence is apt to mislead us. It is more often the form that passes on than the spirit. I shall therefore treat the period of Dante as one manifestation and the period of Donne as another. And I find a third period, not so clear, much more complex, but representing what seem to me distinctly "metaphysical" manifestations. Its parent is Baudelaire, it existed in France between 1870-1890, and the important poets for my purpose are Jules Laforgue, Arthur Rimbaud and Tristan Corbière. And this period also I shall employ to aid in the survey of the seventeenth century.

It is important, in an undertaking of this kind, that we should scrutinise narrowly our method at every possible moment; that we should keep reminding ourselves of our aim; that we should keep testing our tools, knowing what to expect of each, not too much or too little; that we should ask ourselves at every moment whether we are using the right tools, neither too many nor too few. It will be obvious that my aim is not solely to arrive at a definition of metaphysical poetry. One must always be as exact and clear as one can – as clear as one's subject matter permits. And when one's subject matter is literature, clarity beyond a certain point becomes falsification. This is a very important restriction on the activity of literary criticism. When a subject matter is in its nature vague, clarity should consist, not in making it so clear as to be unrecognisable, but in recognising the vagueness, where it begins and ends and the causes of its necessity, and in checking analysis and division at the prudent point. In literature, one can distinguish, but one cannot dissect. For, as I said at the beginning, on the one hand you have the definition, on the other hand you have a mass of material, actual written poetry, and you must not hope to make the two quite fit. In dealing with a school or group of poetry, you are dealing with resemblances which are neither purely natural and unconscious, nor purely conscious and deliberate. You are dealing not only with what men thought and felt, but with what they thought they thought and felt; and your appeal, in the last resort, must be to your own feeling as well as your own

thought. On the one hand, I make a tentative definition. But in making this definition, I have had to rely on my own immediate experience of poetry: obviously, I felt a resemblance between the affects of Donne, Guido and Laforgue before I formed any theory.

And on the other hand, I confess in advance that any definition of metaphysical poetry will be only a partial success, and this is in the nature of the subject matter. This will be evident from my choice of poets to represent the metaphysicals: Donne, Crashaw and Cowley – I have chosen these three deliberately in order to strain my definition to the utmost. Donne will take the leading place in any classification of metaphysical poets; Donne is a fixed point. Donne is as near typical as any one of them could be: on the other hand he is too individual to be a type. Now no theory which will be completely true to Donne will be true of any of the others. And one reason is this. If you define a school of poetry by the spirit, you will probably find either that your definition is so large as to include more than that school, [and] therefore will be useless, or that it is so narrow as to exclude almost everyone but the master. For the school is not wholly united by the spirit, and the more members you include the more tenuous becomes the spirit informing them all. The school is united as much by the letter – by the commonplaces they employ, the common vocabulary, the common locutions. In our study we shall have to investigate this common language of the seventeenth century: the use of hyperbole, of allusion, of conceit. But if we sought for our definition, our principle of unity, merely in the language and metrics, we should arrive merely at a catalogue or table of resemblances, which would never bring us anywhere near a definition, which must seek the causes of these resemblances, and their results. The causes of resemblance between contemporaries must be of three kinds: the common heritage of culture at the same time, common exposure to the same influences at the time, and their influence upon each other, both of personality and thought and of technique. And it must be remembered that the letter, as well as the spirit, giveth life. That Cowley, for instance, by aping the style and adopting the subjects of Donne, comes to resemble him somewhat in spirit as well as form – though no one was less gifted to this end by nature. And yet Cowley, I shall admit in advance, does not satisfy my definition of metaphysical poetry. He fails to make the Word Flesh, though he often makes it Bones.

And the best that I can hope for my definition, then, is that it will throw a sudden ray of light upon what I consider the most valuable aspect

of metaphysical poetry. But I shall proceed to use the term "metaphysical poetry" in two senses: as the subject of my definition – because we must assume that every term is susceptible of definition – and as the collective title of the group of poets in question, and whom I shall take for convenience and also because I give the selection my full assent, to be those poets represented in Professor Grierson's admirable, almost impeccable anthology.[33]

There is one point, relatively unimportant, but which I must expound in passing, because it is sure to occur to your minds, and, if I ignore it, it is sure to stick there and take a more important place than it deserves; and that is this: why retain the title "metaphysical"? why not say "the lyric poets of the seventeenth century," or even the "psychological" poets? Well! there are very good reasons, which I hope to develop in subsequent lectures, why we should not say "psychological" poets – good reasons, that is, while we make use of my definition (which, as I have explained, is one partly imposed by force upon them); but in short, I intend to maintain exactly that the poets of the *trecento* in Italy were not psychological poets, and a term which would explicitly exclude the Italians would rob me of one of my points of triangulation. And the reason for calling the seventeenth century still "metaphysical," is that the term is consecrated by use. "Philosophical" is accordingly a more pretentious term than "metaphysical," which, as employed in literary criticism of the last two hundred and fifty years, has a connotation of "fantastic," "elaborated," which should not be suppressed.

Some years ago I had a correspondence with Mr. Saintsbury, in *The Times* and privately, concerning the application of this term.[34] Mr. Saintsbury not only accepted the term, but wished to give it, by what seems to me almost a *jeu de mots*,[35] a further and more exact significance based on its etymology. Metaphysics was, of course, originally only that work of Aristotle's which came after the *Physics*. But the metaphysical is, for Mr. Saintsbury, that which comes after the natural (I am not sure that Aristotle would not wish to qualify this statement): the metaphysical poets are those who seek something beyond or after nature – refinements of thought and emotion – ergo they are metaphysical. This definition of metaphysical poets as those who have and are chiefly interested in "second thoughts," in Mr. Saintsbury's phrase, is ingenious, and worth considering. But it seems to me to have the usual difficulty of applying to other poetry which we should not call metaphysical, and, still worse, of applying to the second rate still better than it does to the best. I have chosen a definition which is admittedly not

comprehensive, but which I think will tend to ignore the inferior rather than the finer work. But Mr. Saintsbury's phrase should be kept in mind, because it implies an artificiality, perhaps a deliberate exploitation of the senses, which we shall have to examine.

We must, of course, devote the greater part of our time to Donne. I propose first to examine briefly the kind and extent of erudition possessed by Donne, with a view to deciding to what extent they determined the cast of his mind and in what way they find a place in his poetry. This part of our study will be largely a comment and criticism of the conclusions arrived at by Miss Ramsay, in her book *Les idées médiévales chez Donne*, and making use of Miss Ramsay's profound researches.[36] It is important that we form an opinion concerning the proportion of mediaeval and renaissance elements in his composition. From this we pass on to the analysis of Donne's theory of the emotions, of human and divine ecstasy, comparing it, in order still more closely to determine Donne's place between the old world and the new, with that of the Italian poets on the one hand, and with that of such a modern poet as Baudelaire on the other. And finally, we proceed to his mode of expression, his indebtedness and his resemblances to Elizabethan poets, his use of verse forms, and his use of conceits and images. In considering Donne, we must consider all the erotic verse of the time, and attempt to find the common principle, if any. In considering Crashaw, in his turn, we shall be examining the religious verse of his contemporaries – chiefly Herbert, Vaughan, Traherne – and shall attempt to find the common principle of that. In proceeding from Donne to Crashaw, we move from the general to the particular, in that we are concerned with a much more restricted intellect; yet Crashaw is much more typical of the general taste of Europe in that age, and especially of its religious or devotional mentality. A study of Crashaw must therefore be a study of the religion of the first half of the seventeenth century. In Cowley we reach the fringes of the metaphysical poetry; and I have elected to give him so much attention, because it was Cowley who represented this age to the next; and who, by a kind of fusion with Denham, Waller and others, effects a transition, less violent than we are often led to believe by the history books, to the Augustan Age. And at the end I propose again to treat the period as a whole, draw again the general comparisons with the *Trecento* and the French poets of the nineteenth century whom I have mentioned, and extract therefrom the conclusions.

For two opposite reasons, I wish to recommend to those who think they have the fortitude to follow these lectures to the end,[37†] the constant use of Professor Grierson's anthology *Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems of the Seventeenth Century from Donne to Butler*. One reason is that our enquiry will often take us into discussions of philosophy and theology where poetry is easily forgotten, and I would not like you to forget that the matter in hand is not philosophy or theology but poetry, and not Poetry as an abstraction but particular poems which are living things capable of and intended to give enjoyment. The other reason is that this excellent collection contains practically all the poems of the period which we need,[38†] and you will find it a convenience whenever we are occupied with a detailed examination of a text.

Among other books

Praz: *Secentismo e Marinismo in Inghilterra*.
Donne's Sermons: do not recommend L. P. S. preface[39]
Dryden's Essay on "The Proper Wit of Poetry."[40]
Johnson's Lives of Cowley, Denham, Milton, Waller & Dryden.
Cowley's *Essays*.[41]
Gourmont: *Dante, Béatrice et la poésie amoureuse*.[42]
Rossetti: *Early Italian Poets*.[43]
Hobbes & Descartes.[44]
Hooker: *Ecclesiastical Polity*.[45]
Truc: *Les mystiques espagnols*.[46]

NOTES

1. Dante, *La vita nuova*, XVIII. *Trans*: "Ladies, the end and aim of my Love was but the salutation of that lady of whom I conceive that ye are speaking; wherein alone I found that beatitude which is the goal of desire." Trans. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Early Italian Poets* (London: George Newnes, 1904), 195. *Read:* "Madonne, lo fine del mio amore fu già il saluto di questa donna, di cui voi forse intendete; ed in quello demorava la mia beatitudine, chè era fine di tutti i miei desiderii." TSE owned *Le Opere di Dante*, Florence, 1921.

2. Untraced; possibly remembered from a music-hall or ragtime lyric.

3. TSE apparently added both the epigraphs and author's preface (on separate pages) sometime after the last lecture on 9 Mar and before he took delivery of the professionally typed text and carbon copy on 30 Mar 1926. The epigraph page is missing from the top copy (King's) but preserved in the carbon (Houghton); the preface is present in both copies; no earlier drafts survive.

4†. The following sentence was later crossed out: "Even the obscurer poets receive recognition: last year the Nonesuch Press, which is a pretty good index of popular cultivated taste,

produced a sumptuous edition of the poems of Bishop King." *The Poems of Bishop Henry King*, edited by John Sparrow, appeared in May 1925.

5. Saintsbury's *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period* had appeared in three volumes in 1903, 1904, and 1921, Grierson's two-volume *The Poems of John Donne* in 1912.

6. Writing late in 1925, before the lecture was delivered on 26 Jan 1926, TSE dates his career from his first publications in the *Harvard Advocate* in 1907-08. In a later revision, "eighteen" was crossed out and replaced with "twenty."

7. TSE alludes to an anecdote in Izaak Walton's life (1670) of clergyman and poet George Herbert (1593-1633), author of *The Temple* (1633). On his way to meet musical friends in Salisbury, Herbert stopped to render aid to and bestow blessings upon a poor man. Arriving uncharacteristically soiled and disheveled, he was rebuked by one of the musicians for engaging in "so dirty an employment." Herbert replied before turning to the music at hand: "And though I do not wish yet for the like occasion every day, yet let me tell you, I would not willingly pass one day of my life without comforting a sad soul, or shewing mercy; and I praise God for this occasion. And now let's tune our instruments." *The Complete Angler & The Lives of Donne, Wotton, Hooker, Herbert & Sanderson* (London: Macmillan, 1906), 409.

8. In "A Discourse concerning the Original and Progress of Satire" (1693), Dryden wrote that Donne "affects the metaphysics, not only in his satires, but in his amorous verses, where nature only should reign." *Essays of John Dryden*, vol 2 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1900), 19. Johnson established the common usage in his life of Cowley (1779): "About the beginning of the seventeenth century appeared a race of writers that may be termed the metaphysical poets . . . The metaphysical poets were men of learning, and to show their learning was their whole endeavor." *Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets* (London: Frederick Warne, 1872), 8; hereafter abbreviated *Lives*. TSE's copy is signed and inscribed: "This copy I bought second hand many years ago, I know not where, and with this copy I first became acquainted with Johnson's Lives."

9. The primary works of Henry King, Thomas Stanley (1625-78), Edward Benlowes (1603-76) and William Chamberlayne (1619-79) were resurrected in Saintsbury's *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period*; the *Poems* of Thomas Traherne (1636-74) were discovered in manuscript in 1897 and published in 1903.

10. In his life of Cowley, Johnson claims that the "kind of writing" characteristic of the metaphysical poets was "borrowed" from Giambattista Marino and "recommended by the example" of Donne and Jonson. His list of their "immediate successors" includes those "of whom any remembrance can be said to remain," some of whom he considers to be but marginal associates: "Denham and Waller sought another way to fame, by improving the harmony of our numbers. Milton tried the metaphysic style only in his lines upon Hobson the carrier . . . Suckling neither improved versification, nor abounded in conceits. The fashionable style remained chiefly with Cowley; Suckling could not reach it, and Milton disdained it" (*Lives* 10).

11. In his "Preface to *Sylvae*" (1685), Dryden acknowledges Cowley as a great authority on wit and applauds him for having introduced Pindaric verse to his age. Dryden admired Donne's wit but was critical of his poetry, writing in "A Discourse concerning the Original and Progress of Satire": "I may safely say it of this present age, that if we are not so great wits as Donne, yet certainly we are better poets." *Essays of John Dryden*, 2:102.

12. *echt metaphysisch*: truly metaphysical.

13. Words dropped by typist, marked for insertion by TSE. Santayana characterizes and praises Goethe's treatment of the Faust legend as a "philosophical journey," one that begins with Spinoza and explores a variety of liberating romantic philosophies: "*Faust* ends on the same philosophical level on which it began – the level of romanticism. The worth of life lies in pursuit, not in attainment; therefore, everything is worth pursuing, and nothing brings satisfaction – save this endless destiny itself." *Three Philosophical Poets*, 195.

14. *trancher les genres*: divide the types.

15. TSE likely read of the practice of "Sortes Virgilianae" in Johnson's life of Cowley; an editorial note in his edition explains: "Consulting the Virgilian Lots, Sortes Virgilianae, is a method of divination by the opening of Virgil, and applying to the circumstances of the peruser the first passage in either of the two pages that he accidentally fixes his eye on" (*Lives* 4). The interpretations of Shakespeare to which TSE alludes likely include Delia Bacon's *The Philosophy of the Plays of Shakespeare Unfolded* (1857), W. F. C. Wigston's *Bacon, Shakespeare, and the Rosicrucians* (1888), and Mrs. Henry Potts's *Francis Bacon and his Secret Society* (1891), all of which linked "Shakespeare" to Francis Bacon and occult societies. W. B. Yeats placed Blake firmly in the occult tradition in several critical editions and essays known to TSE, including the three-volume *Works of William Blake: Poetic, Symbolic, and Critical* (1893), the introduction to *The Poems of William Blake* (1893) and the essays on Blake collected in *Ideas of Good and Evil* (1903).

16. Sappho's "Ode to Anactoria" (ca. 600 BC).

17. Catullus, V.4-5. *Trans*: "Suns may set and rise again. For us, [when the short light has once set, remains to be slept the sleep of one unbroken night.]" *Catullus, Tibullus, and Pervigilium Veneris*, trans. F. W. Cornish (London: William Heinemann, 1912), 7. *Read*: "soles occidere et redire possunt: / Nobis, cum semel occidit brevis lux, / Nox est perpetua una dormienda." TSE's misquotation in the second line is queried in the margin in Herbert Read's hand, "nobis cum semel?"; he quoted the second and subsequent lines accurately in "Andrew Marvell" (312).

18. Lewis Carroll, *The Hunting of the Snark: An Agony, in Eight Fits* (London: Macmillan, 1876), 48; ll. 19-20. *Read*: "Till (merely from nervousness, not from good-will) / They marched along shoulder to shoulder." In "Fit the Fifth: The Beaver's Lesson," the Butcher and the Beaver become frightened during their determinedly separate sallies into a desolate valley in quest of the Snark.

19. *Trans*: "nothing is more beautiful than the commonplace." From section LXXVI of *Mon cœur mis à nu* [*My Heart Laid Bare*], in *Œuvres posthumes et correspondances inédites* (Paris: Quantin, 1887), 121; *read*: "le lieu commun." Trans. Joseph Shipley, *Baudelaire: His Prose and Poetry* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1919), 246.

20. *King Lear* V.ii.9-11; *read*: "Men must endure / Their going hence, even as their coming hither, / Ripeness is all."

21. In "Dante" (1920), TSE suggests that *Purgatorio* XVI, XVII, and XVIII contain "passages of pure exposition . . . the philosophy of Aristotle strained through the schools" (232).

22. The concluding lines of "Two in the Campagna" (1855), in which Browning's persona expresses his frustration that in spite of closest companionship he cannot submerge his being in that of his lover.

23. TSE refers to F. H. Bradley's doctrine of "immediate experience," a nonrelational moment of knowing and feeling in which subject and object are one. In the first chapter of his dissertation, TSE defines that moment of unity, which falls apart of itself into the intellection of subjects and objects, as the starting point of knowledge: "although we cannot know immediate experience directly as an object, we can yet arrive at it by inference, and even conclude that it is the starting point of our knowing, since it is only in immediate experience that knowledge and its object are one" (1.246).

24. Herbert Read has underlined "thinks she sees" with a pencilled note in the top margin: "She says expressly that she cannot see them, and discovers why they are not to be seen!"

25. In the *Iliad*, Book III, Helen says that though she can see all the rest of the Achaians, "Two princes of the people yet, I nowhere can behold. . . My naturall brothers" (ll. 256-59). She imagines them elsewhere, but Homer intervenes with dramatic irony: "Nor so; for holy Tellus' womb inclos'd those worthy men / In Sparta" (ll. 262-63). *The Iliads of Homer*, trans. George Chapman, vol 1 (London: J. M. Dent, 1901), 66; this two volume edition is in TSE's library.

26. Teresa of Ávila (1515-82), Spanish mystic, Carmelite nun, and Roman Catholic Saint (canonized 1622).

27. Plato's dramatic dialogue, the *Banquet*, or *Symposium* (ca. 383-85) is set at a drinking-feast in the house of Agathon, whose guests honor the god of Love by making after-dinner speeches in definition of love. It was translated and imitated by Neoplatonists like Pico della Mirandola and Marsilio Ficino, both of whom were known to Donne.

28. *Inferno* V.121-23.*Trans*: "*There is* no greater pain than to recall a happy time in wretchedness" (*DC1* 54-55). *Read*: "dolore, / che ricordarsi del tempo felice / nella miseria."

29. *Purgatorio* XVI.85, 88. *Trans*: "From his hands . . . there issues . . . the simple, tender soul, who knoeth naught" (*DC2* 197). *Read*: "Esce di mano a lui . . . l'anima semplicetta, che sa nulla"; TSE offered his own translation of these lines in "Dante" (1929) and adapted an English version of them for the first line of *Animula* (1929): "Issues from the hand of God, the simple soul" (*SE* 260; *CPP* 70).

30. *Paradiso* XXXIII.91-96. *Trans*: "The universal form of this complex I think that I beheld, because more largely, as I say this, I feel that I rejoice. A single moment maketh a deeper lethargy for me than twenty and five centuries have wrought on the emprise that erst threw Neptune in amaze at Argo's shadow" (*DC3* 405). TSE offered his own translation of these lines in "Dante" (1929; *SE* 267). *Read*: "La forma universal di questo nodo / credo ch'io vidi . . . mi sento ch'io godo. / Un punto solo m'è maggior letargo, / che venticinque secoli alla impresa, / che fe' Nettuno ammirar l'ombra d'Argo."

31. Members of Dante's "group" include Guido Guinizelli (ca. 1230-76), whose doctrine of Love Dante praises in the *Vita nuova* (XX) and whom he recognizes as his literary father in the *Purgatorio* (XXVI); Guido Cavalcanti, to whom Dante dedicates the *Vita nuova* as "the first among my friends"; and Cino da Pistoia (1270-1337), who wrote numerous sonnets to Dante. Guinizelli's sonnets and *canzone*, Dante's sonnets to Cavalcanti and Cino, and theirs to him, were translated by Dante Gabriel Rossetti in *The Early Italian Poets* (1861).

32. Praz compares Donne's "The Extasie" to Guinizelli's *canzone*, "Al cor gentil ripara sempre Amore" ["Of the Gentle Heart"], 28-29. TSE reviewed Praz's *Secentismo e marinismo in Inghilterra: John Donne – Richard Crashaw* in "An Italian Critic on Donne and Crashaw" (596).

33. *Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems of the Seventeenth Century: Donne to Butler* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1921), hereafter abbreviated *MLP*; TSE reviewed the book in "The Metaphysical Poets" (375).

34. See TSE's letter to the editor, "The Metaphysical Poets" (386).

35. *jeu de mots:* a play on words, a pun.

36. The second edition of Mary Paton Ramsay's *Les Doctrines médiévales chez Donne* (1917) appeared in 1924; in "An Italian Critic on Donne and Crashaw," TSE suggested that Praz's study was "a correction of some of the excesses of that scholarly and standard book" (597).

37†. In a later revision, TSE crossed out "to those who think they have the fortitude to follow these lectures to the end."

38†. In a later revision, TSE crossed out the remainder of the lecture text from this point.

39. See TSE's review of *Donne's Sermons: Selected Passages*, ed. Logan Pearsall Smith (1919) (165).

40. In TSE's edition of Dryden's *Dramatic Essays* (London: Dent, 1912), the editor William Henry Hudson freely gives the title "The Proper Wit of Poetry" to Dryden's "An Account of the Ensuing Poem," prefixed to his historical poem, *Annus Mirabilis, the Year of Wonders, 1666* (1667). The imposed title comes from the third paragraph of the essay, which TSE has marked in his copy: "*Wit written* is that which is well defined, the happy result of thought or product of imagination. But to proceed from wit, in the general notion of it, to the proper wit of an Heroic or Historical Poem, I judge it chiefly to consist in the delightful imagining of persons, actions, passions, or things" (192).

41. TSE used A. R. Waller's edition of *Abraham Cowley: Essays, Plays and Sundry Verses* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1906), borrowed from the London Library.

42. Remy de Gourmont, *Dante, Béatrice et la poésie amoureuse. Essai sur l'idéal féminin en Italie à la fin du XIII^e^ siècle* [Dante, Beatrice, and Love Poetry: An Essay on the Feminine Ideal at the End of the Thirteenth Century] (Paris: Mercure de France, 1908).

43. TSE assigned "A few translations of Italian Sonnets in Rossetti's *Early Italian Poets*" to his 1918 tutorial class in Elizabethan Literature (1.756).

44. TSE's copy of Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan* (1651) was published in the New Universal Library series (London: George Routledge & Sons [1907]). It is inscribed with his name and dated Feb 1914. For citing the works of René Descartes, TSE used *Œuvres choisies de Descartes* (Paris: Garnier, 1865).

45. TSE owned the three-volume, leather-bound edition of Richard Hooker's *Works*, arranged by the Revd. John Keble, 2nd edn. (Oxford: The University Press, 1841); he also owned a copy (Houghton) of vol II (Book v) of the Everyman edition (1907) of *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1593-7; 1661).

46. *Les Mystiques espagnols: Sainte Térèse – Saint Jean de la Croix* [The Spanish Mystics: St. Theresa – St. John of the Cross] (Paris: La Renaissance du Livre [1921]). TSE used several books and editions by the French critic Gonzague Truc (1877-1972) in preparing his lectures; he wrote to Herbert Read on 11 Dec 1925: "Truc has a new book *Notre temps* (Renaissance du livre) I have not seen it, but I think rather well of him" (*L2* 798).

Lecture II

Donne and the Middle Ages

I propose in this lecture to discuss the studies of Donne and their influence upon his mind and his poetry. For this purpose I shall employ chiefly the work of Miss Mary Ramsay before mentioned. Miss Ramsay conducted her investigation into Donne's reading with the thoroughness only possible to a candidate for a doctor's degree; there is not a single reference or allusion which she has not made indefatigable attempts to track down; and her book will, I expect, remain the standard work on the subject for many generations to come. Miss Ramsay draws certain conclusions regarding Donne's cast of mind; happily, her documentation is so complete that it provides itself the means for us to qualify some of these conclusions.

Miss Ramsay's thesis, as stated in her foreword, is this: that Donne possessed a "very complete" philosophical system and a profound mysticism and that his conception of the universe, and his philosophical technique, are essentially mediaeval. It is these assertions which I propose to examine.[1]

There is no question that Donne's natural inclination of mind bore him toward theological and legal studies. The tendency toward the law, more pronounced than a reader of Miss Ramsay's book might suppose, is of some significance. Donne's reading in civil and canon law was so extensive that at one moment there was a question whether he should not look in this direction for a career: though we are also to infer, from Walton's life, that his studies in law were pursued for many years without any such practical aim.[2] In any case, they indicate some bias toward the more public and disputatious, rather than the more private and speculative attitude toward philosophy. Donne's reading, in law, in theology, in medicine, and in everything which at that time could be subsumed under the genus of philosophy, was immense. Even during his youthful period of dissipation – and we may suspect that Donne, like many other men, was not above the vanity of magnifying his adolescent debaucheries in retrospect – Walton tells us that he always reserved the hours from four until ten in the morning for study – leaving us to believe that after ten o'clock he was ready for the solicitations of whatever pleasure presented itself. When we inspect the dreary index of

his reading which Miss Ramsay most usefully gives us, we recoil.[3] No man of Donne's ability and attainments ever seems to have read a greater amount of positive rubbish. But the lists themselves are interesting reading, and provide a pertinent comment on Miss Ramsay's thesis. For we remark at once, how large a part of this reading is in authors contemporary, or nearly so. True, as a thorough theologian, he was familiar with the fathers of the church, and with the most important of the mediaeval philosophers; but so, as Miss Ramsay herself says, was Hooker, and Miss Ramsay does not go so far as to say that Hooker's conception of the universe was mediaeval.[4*] Donne must have read Aquinas with care; he quotes Bonaventura, and Augustine of course influenced him very strongly.[5] But he was equally at home with later theologians, both Roman and Protestant. Walton tells us that when Donne, at the age of nineteen, betook himself seriously to the study of theology, for the purpose of resolving his hesitation between the Roman and the Reformed Church, he plunged into the study of Bellarmine, so thoroughly that a year later he was able to show the Dean of Gloucester – that dean whose name Walton cannot remember – all of Cardinal Bellarmine's works annotated by his own hand.[6] Bellarmine was no mediaeval philosopher, but a contemporary some thirty years older than Donne, and still living when Donne studied his works. But Donne made himself in time equally familiar [with] the works of all the other contemporaries who distinguished themselves in theology, and of a great many whose distinction is now unintelligible. He knew the works of Luther, of Calvin, of Melanchthon, of Peter Martyr, among Protestant writers;[7] of Cajetan, Valdez and Fra Victoria among the more philosophical of Roman commentators:[8] the controversial literature of the Jesuits was at his finger-tips; finally, he was acquainted with many of those writers of the later Renaissance whose orthodoxy, from either a Roman or a Protestant standpoint, is rather doubtful, such as Nicholas of Cusa and the host of students who exploited the Kabbalah, the hermetic writings and other compilations of the same sort.[9] In the Kabbalah Donne was always interested.[10†] In this connection it is not without significance to refer to Donne's ancestry. His great-grandmother was a sister of Sir Thomas More.[11] More wrote a biography of Pico della Mirandola, which was much admired by Donne.[12] Here is one influence already in the family: that of a man who is often taken as typical of the Renaissance, and who was certainly one of the most successful advertisers of neo-platonism and occultism of his age. More admired Pico, and was also influenced by Colet, who translated that recension of neo-platonic

philosophy known as Dionysius the Areopagite.[13] The great-grandfather of Donne, More's brother-in-law, was active in theological controversy, which led to his conversion to Protestantism.[14] The grandfather of Donne was John Heywood, the author of the Interludes;[15] his uncle, whom he must have known, was Jasper Heywood, the author of the first translation of three of the plays of Seneca, who subsequently became a Jesuit.[16] In literary criticism heredity is not to be overlooked, and the ancestral dispositions behind Donne seem pretty clear. A remarkable family, and one which certainly kept up with the times: the influences that breathed on Donne's nursery do not seem to have been very mediaeval.

What Donne's reading does show is a pronounced taste, a passion, for theology of the more controversial and legal type – theology, in fact as it was practised in his day; and we think that King James was absolutely right when he forced Donne to take orders.[17] What Miss Ramsay does not show, or attempt to show, is that his reading was any more mediaeval than that of any other theologian of his time. What she makes abundantly clear is the partiality, as well as the immensity, of his reading. He had presumably been instructed in the Latin classics, if not in the Greek, by his tutors, but he makes little use of them. One allusion makes us believe that he had read the *Divine Comedy*, or had the opportunity of doing so; but he was certainly very little affected by it.[18] That he should have been indifferent to the poetry of his own age in England – in spite of his acquaintance with Jonson, who most nobly praises him – is more excusable:[19] poets and prose writers too are sometimes very ignorant of the work of their contemporaries – sometimes, I make no doubt, by a self-protective instinct. But this point is of great importance: Donne was a theologian by profession, a poet only by avocation. When we understand this, I think that his mind will appear to us much less mediaeval than at first sight.

For some of the characteristics and tastes which seem to us to specify the Renaissance, do so because we are familiar with the works of poets and humanists rather than professional men. For instance, Donne seems to us less modern than Roger Ascham, who lived in an earlier generation. Ascham was indifferent to the thought of the Middle Ages, and was one of the first to develop the modern, or rehabilitate the ancient, standards of criticism of Latin literature – a stout partisan of Cicero.[20] But our ideas, vague as they are, of the Elizabethan mind, are derived mainly from the work of the humanising poets – Wyatt, Surrey, Spenser, with the derivations from French and Italian literature, Fulke Greville and the Senecals – or

from the work of the dramatists.[21] Marlowe, Chapman and Jonson were classical scholars.[22] The dramatists were occupied with a new form; their occupation made them somewhat a special social group; they assimilated those influences which could be most easily turned to account; their communications were sometimes unedifying. Donne, even in his frequentation of "The Mermaid," can hardly more than have touched the fringe of this society.[23]

Nevertheless, it is remarkable that a man of Donne's mental curiosity should appear so little affected by some of the most potent influences of Tudor times. Three great influences of the dramatic age – Montaigne, Machiavelli and Seneca – hardly reach him. Seneca, it is true, he quotes, but it is the conventional "moral Seneca," the prose Seneca, not the dramatist.[24] But this also is accounted for by the speciality of his interests. It is not only the men and the profession, however, but the time. One reason why Donne appears so much more mediaeval than let us say Ben Jonson is that he belongs to a later age. For the early seventeenth century seems to us in some ways more remote than the sixteenth. It is not so: a step had been omitted, and a step which when taken brought the seventeenth century nearer to our own time. Not until the seventeenth century did many important works of the sixteenth century bear their fruit. But the century which was to be more perhaps than any other the century of theological politics was announced by the ascent of a Scottish theologian to the English throne, and this Scottish theologian made Donne his private chaplain.[25]

It is necessary to insist upon the unique character of this century which, just because it experienced the acute crisis of the transition from the old to the new Europe (to the Europe, we might say, of 1914), is the most difficult of all centuries to understand. Every man was a theologian at least to the extent that he lived in a world where questions of theology had become identified with politics, international and domestic. In international affairs, Protestantism had arrived at the point where it was no longer an affair of a few scattered heretical schisms, but had become identified with the rise of powerful nationalisms. England, having been a weak and almost bankrupt nation with a hostile nation on its northern frontier, had become powerful, prosperous and united Britain, in which the Roman element was becoming more and more negligible, and the activity of Protestant schismatics more and more important. Lutheranism had detached Scandinavia and northern Germany from southern Europe, and was making the slow preparations for another world power. Calvinism from Geneva supplied a constant

source of dissension in France. And it was in this world in which theological interests were becoming more and more identified with political interests, that the campaign of the Jesuits, prepared in the previous century and reinforced by the exaltation of Spanish mysticism, spent the greatest force.

That Jesuitism is a phenomenon typically of the Renaissance is a fact upon which I insist. It represents a very important point of disagreement between Mr. Middleton Murry and myself. Mr. Murry holds the opinion that Jesuitism is identical with Christianity, and that Christianity – Roman Christianity – is identical with classicism; therefore, Jesuitism is identical with classicism.[26†] I cannot help thinking that a little study of the history, constitution and practices of the Society of Jesus would show him that it has nothing to do with classicism, but is on the contrary, what I, if not he, would call Romantic.[27†] The fact that the Society of Jesus is of Spanish origin is an indication that it is outside of the Graeco-Roman classical tradition. There is plenty of evidence that its founder St. Ignatius was a romantic, a reader of romances, an admirer of Amadis of Gaul, a sort of Don Quixote.[28] There is some evidence, too, that he drew his inspiration, and the constitution of his order, which differs radically from every other Christian order, not from Christian, but from Mohammedan examples. Its principles are non-Aristotelian, and are surprisingly like those of certain Moslem orders flourishing in Spain in Ignatius' time. I refer to an interesting and rare work, Herrmann Müller: *Les Origines de la société de Jésus*.[29] That the Spanish mystics of the sixteenth century were also romantics, that they and St. Ignatius have a certain affinity with Martin Luther and Rousseau, I hope to indicate at various points.

Now the very intensity of the theological battle in this time was itself a force of destruction to religion itself. This is not immediately evident, nor its bearing upon our subject. But it is my purpose to show that Donne was, as a theologian, very much of his time, and that this time was anything but mediaeval: and second, to lay bare the general aspect of the catabolic tendency, the tendency toward dissolution, which I find in Donne's poetry. Let us therefore consider the spirit which characterises, which had to characterise, the theological controversies of the time, contrasted with those of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Our prejudice about mediaeval philosophy, I think, is this: we conceive of the philosophers as merely playing a game which had a great many strict rules. They were not allowed to question the truth of innumerable dogmas: their thought was crushed by authority; and accordingly they spent their time in dividing hairs and

determining the specific gravity of angels – as a man, having to pass an hour in a country railway station without anything to read, might cast up the figures on the timetable. The belief in the triviality of their occupations, and in the restrictions to their liberty of thought, should be dissipated even by a cursory reading of a little primer, *La Philosophie au moyen âge*, by M. Étienne Gilson, who has done so much to make possible our understanding of this philosophy. I shall not attempt a précis of this book;[30] I shall merely call attention to two positive advantages enjoyed by this philosophy. The philosophers, unlike modern philosophers, held certain beliefs in common; it was therefore possible for them to some extent to understand each other – a feat impossible to our contemporaries. Second, the Church could and did afford them very great liberty. For the Church was one; it was not occupied with polemic or defence against other churches. The systems of the philosophers were hardly of a nature to inflame whole races to heresy. For they were philosophical systems; their inventors were concerned with the discovery of truth, of such truth as was accessible to them; they were men interested in ideas for their own sake. And in whatever degree of truth or error this philosophy issued, I think there is no question that the only hope of finding truth is to seek for it regardless of practical consequences.

Compare this situation of the thirteenth-century philosopher and theologian, in the freedom of their universities, unhampered, unhurried, unconcerned with wars and dynasties, with that of the Roman Church and of the Reformed Churches at the time of the Counter-Reformation. It is illustrated by the Society of Jesus. Nothing could be more different from the Orders of the Middle Ages. I speak with neither approval, disrespect nor bias, but purely as a detached critic. The Society of Jesus was formed for the purpose of combating heresy. It was military, not meditative or charitable, in its primary purpose. And admirably did it do its work. But though it produced accomplished men of letters, erudite and subtle commentators, though it had perhaps on the whole better brains, and far better organisation than had Protestantism, and though it counted among its numbers pious and devoted men, it produced no great philosopher, no advance in pure thought. Neither, for that matter, did the Protestant Churches. They were all too absorbed in controversy to have time for speculation. Politics cannot wait. It is in such an age that the legal mind, rather than the theoretical mind, flourishes in theology; such a mind, in fact, as that of Donne.

Theology which is bent on political controversy, theology at bay, extinguishes the light of pure ideas, the Greek disinterestedness of mind, which the Middle Ages had revived; but it does not extinguish religious sentiment. On the contrary, the religious fervour of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries burns with a fierce heat which is in itself alarming, as being a rapid combustion in acceleration of nature. And human curiosity, diverted in one direction, turns to another. Religion and theology, abandoning the pursuit of metaphysical truth, develop in the seventeenth century in the direction of psychology; an alteration which Signor Praz has well noted.

We are now able to form a larger generalisation than that which I gave you concerning the position [of] theological philosophy then and in the thirteenth century. Men had lived for centuries under a church which was the incorporated *sensus communis* of Europe.[31] When Europe was broken up by the several great national religions, Rome ceased to be the detached Olympian arbiter of ideas, and became merely one combatant on the field. It no longer controlled the thought of northern Europe, it had no longer the same control over its own thought. It is possible – I hazard the suggestion without sufficient knowledge – that the experiences of St. Theresa and her fellow mystics in Spain would in an earlier and less dangerous period have been subjected to closer scrutiny, and been less quickly accepted by the Church. The schismatic Churches, of course, were in no better position: they also were forced to accept ideas for their immediate polemic value. But expediency was not the only new criterion; a more powerful one still was to arise, and make itself felt in philosophy outside of the Church and in literature: the success of ideas was to come to depend more and more upon the suffrage of a larger and larger semi-literate public. Success meant what pleased or impressed the greatest number of persons at any moment. We are already in full democracy.

I must plead pardon for these tedious generalities, which will not I hope appear so tedious when we come to make particular application of them. I now return to the point which I had introduced before this digression: the diversion of human inquiry from ontology to psychology. Not only a diversion of inquiry; it is rather as if, at certain times, the constitution of the human mind altered to adapt itself to the reception of new categories of truth, and new elements of thought. Often it has been remarked, the state of mind appropriate to a particular science comes into existence before the science itself. Diderot in this sense "anticipated" Darwin;

Dostoevski, it is often said, though the evidence is less satisfactory, anticipated Freud; the fancies of Leonardo, the labours of the alchemists, were vague anticipations. But in Donne we are concerned with a connection closer and less interrupted; though I cannot tell you in detail how it came about. But certainly Donne is in a sense a psychologist. You find it in his verse compared to earlier verse, in his sermons compared to earlier sermons. I am not here concerned with how the change came about, step by step; that would be a very interesting but long and exact study. But dissolution so frequently begins within, that I think that the Jesuits had a great deal to do with it: their fine distinctions and discussions of conduct and casuistry tend in the direction of a certain self-consciousness which had not been conspicuous in the world before. I am here more concerned with defining clearly the difference in point of view, a true Copernican revolution which occurred centuries before Kant was born, a difference which marks the real abyss between the classic scholastic philosophy and all philosophy since.[32] It was impressed upon the world by Descartes, like his own figure, and by his own figure, when he compared the impression of "ideas" on the mind to the impression of the seal on the wax; and when he clearly stated that what we know is not the world of objects, but our own ideas of these objects.[33] The revolution was immense. Instead of ideas as meanings, as references to an outside world, you have suddenly a new world coming into existence, inside your own mind and therefore by the usual implication inside your own head. Mankind suddenly retires inside its several skulls, until you hear Nietzsche – pretty well tormented in his cranial lodging – declaring that "nothing is inside, nothing is outside."[34] And the most brilliant of contemporary critics of criticism, Mr. I. A. Richards, declaring (after Kant and Descartes) that love is a spontaneous emotion bearing no relation to the object of affection.[35]

Descartes: 6th. Meditation (Garnier, 128):[36]

Je conçois, dis-je, aisément que l'imagination se peut faire de cette sorte, s'il est vrai qu'il y ait des corps; et parce que je ne puis rencontrer aucune autre voie pour expliquer comment elle se fait, je conjecture de là probablement qu'il y en a: mais ce n'est que probablement; et quoique j'examine soigneusement toutes choses, je ne trouve pas néanmoins que, de cette idée distincte de la nature corporelle que j'ai en mon imagination, je puisse tirer aucun argument qui conclue avec nécessité l'existence de quelque corps.[37]

This extraordinary crude and stupid piece of reasoning is the sort of thing which gave rise to the whole of the pseudo-science of epistemology which has haunted the nightmares of the last three hundred years.

I. A. Richards: *The Principles of Literary Criticism*. I have been unable to find again the passage alluded to.[38] But I will quote another specimen from this book: page 264: (in describing a view which Mr. Richards opposes in this place and which is similar to the Dantesque view):

> Love not grounded upon knowledge would be described as worthless. We ought not to admire what is not beautiful and if our mistress be not really beautiful when impartially considered we ought, so the doctrine runs, to admire her, if at all, for other reasons. The chief points of interest about such views are the confusions which make them plausible. Beauty as an internal quality of things is usually involved, as well as Good the unanalysable Idea. Both are special twists given to some of our impulses[39]* by habits deriving ultimately from desires. They linger in our minds because to think of a thing as Good or Beautiful gives more *immediate* emotional satisfaction than to *refer* to it as satisfying our impulses in one special fashion or another.

Far from me to throw myself into a battle of psychology for which I am not trained. I would only ask whether this is really a "confusion" on the part of the Italians, as Mr. Richards believes, or merely a different and alien point of view. I am not concerned which is right. I am only concerned to know whether the difference here between Guido Cavalcanti and Mr. Richards is not fundamentally a difference between what the late T. E. Hulme – the most fertile mind of my generation, and one of the glories of this University – would call the Categories of the thirteenth century and the Categories of the nineteenth century – a different mode of thought.[40] The difference between what I call ontologism and psychologism – which is perhaps a different [form] of the old difference between realism and nominalism.

Now Donne is not consciously of this way of thinking. In the exact sense Donne had no philosophy at all, but exactly by having no philosophy he prepared himself within for the new state of mind. Miss Ramsay judges by what he read and the terms (scholastic) which he uses, and concludes that his mind was mediaeval. I judge him (apart from the large proportion of his reading which is not mediaeval at all) by the way in which he read, and judge him to be exactly of his own moment of time. What is clear is that

Donne read a great deal without order or valuation, and that he thought in a spasmodic and fragmentary way when he thought at all. Tradition has really little weight with him; he wishes to read everything, and is willing to take something from everywhere, and is not too nice about coherence. A notion of Maimonides or Averroes could exist in the mind of Donne with the same notion as assimilated by Aquinas.[41]

And the notions of the pseudo-Dionysius are revived sometimes *telles quelles*,[42] as they are in the thought of the fifteenth-century Eckhardt.[43] The distinction may be made a very fine one. Miss Ramsay might say that Donne's mind is of the Middle Ages, though his feelings are of the Renaissance. I should say that where the feelings are, there will the mind be also; and that you cannot think with Aquinas unless you can feel with him. It is in the direction of his attention and interest, the direction in which Donne made his real observations, that I seek for his mind; in the examination of his own sensations and ideas and emotions.

I shall have occasion later, in connection with Crashaw, to refer to the Spanish mystics. And in my lecture of next week I shall call your attention to a mysticism of the twelfth century which is different from that of the Spaniards and different from that of the Germans, and which is in the direct classical, Aristotelian tradition, and which is the mysticism of Dante. There are several mysticisms. But it may be as well to make clear that to me the Spanish mystics of the sixteenth century – St. Theresa, St. John of the Cross, Luis of Granada, St. Philip Neri (to whom the church at Arundel is dedicated) and St. Ignatius, are as much psychologists as Descartes, and Donne, and as much romanticists as Rousseau.[44]

And certainly there was here an immense unexplored field, which the following centuries were to exploit, but which Donne was one of the first to devote himself to. From one point of view, to turn the attention to the mind in this way is to create, for the objects alter by being observed. To contemplate an idea, because it is my idea, to observe its emotional infusion, to play with it, instead of using it as a plain and simple meaning, brings often curious and beautiful things to light, though it lends itself, this petting and teasing of one's mental offspring, to extremities of torturing of language, [as] we shall see. But it is not, as with the Elizabethans at their worst excesses (mobled queen),[45] the vocabulary that is the object of torment – it is the idea itself. Let us take the first poem in Professor Grierson's collection.

I wonder by my troth, what thou, and I
Did, till we lov'd? were we not wean'd till then?
But suck'd on countrey pleasures, childishly?
Or snorted we in the seaven sleepers den?
T'was so; But this, all pleasures fancies bee.
If ever any beauty I did see,
Which I desir'd, and got, t'was but a dreame of thee.[46]

This is an example, in Donne's lighter, though still not frivolous mood, of what I have called teasing the idea. Observe that the choice and arrangement of words is simple and chaste and extremely felicitous. There is a startling directness (as often at the beginning of Donne's poems) about the idea, which must have occurred to many lovers, of the abrupt break and alteration of life which such a crisis can make. These *trouvailles* in themselves are enough to set Donne apart from some of his imitators: Cowley never found anything so good. The point is, however, that Donne, instead of pursuing the meaning of the idea, letting it flow into the usual sequence of thought, arrests it, in order to extract every possible ounce of the emotion suspended in it. To such ideas of Donne's, therefore, there is a certain opacity of feeling; they are not simple significances and directions. In thus arresting the idea Donne often succeeds in bringing to light curious aspects and connections which would not otherwise be visible; he infuses, as it were, the dose of bismuth which makes the position of the intestine apparent on the X-ray screen.

Perhaps a parallel will make this point clearer; from another poet of the same century. When Phaedra recalls, at the sight of Hippolytus, the memory of his father in the time when she first knew him, she bursts into the famous passage

Que faisiez-vous alors? Pourquoi, sans Hippolyte
Des héros de la Grèce assembla-t-il l'élite? etc.[47]

Here is a similar thought used in a similar way: Donne's question, What was our life before we loved? and the question of Racine's heroine, Why were you not there, why were you not of proper age, at my proper time for loving you? They are, if you like, rhetorical questions: for Donne does not stay to know the answer; and to Phaedra's question there was indeed no answer. But each question has an intense emotional value; Phaedra's indeed has the very highest tragic value, it is charged with all the content of impossibility and frustration. The violence of the passion, the torrent of the

alexandrines are such that we do not at first realise that Phaedra is being right metaphysical; that she is pursuing the fancy in order to squeeze every drop of agony for herself out of it. But Racine was indeed a psychologist, a far greater one than Donne; he is almost unique in his ability to give such thoughts the maximum of both poetic and dramatic value. For in fact they do not easily lend themselves to dramatic action. It is very different from the operation of Sophocles when he crushed his Oedipus beneath the frightful repetition and variation of every aspect of his crime, in that great speech of his; for that is a straightforward development of every implication of the direct meaning.[48]

It is not so much in the thought, as in the development of the thought, that Donne's metaphysical peculiarity resides. Let us take similar ideas of violent contrast that are developed differently. There is a passage in the *Odyssey* which has been used by someone, I think Matthew Arnold, as an illustration of sublimity; I should like to use it for another purpose. It is when Ulysses, on his visit to Hell, meets the shade of Elpenor, who, you remember, had fallen overboard and been drowned some time before.[49] The meeting is totally a surprise.

> Elpenor! hast thou come faster on foot than we in our black ships?[50]

This question, like those of Donne and Phaedra, is a sort of *Annahme*; it implies something entertained but not precisely believed.[51] Donne, or a supersubtle heroine of one of Racine's tragedies, would have rung every change on this notion. Not so Homer; he deals with it literally, and passes on, for he is interested in the outside world, not in the world of floating ideas. Another parallel, not quite so close, is found in the *Purgatorio*. The shade of Statius suddenly realises that the personage with whom he had been speaking is no less than Virgil; and the one transported falls at the feet of the other. Virgil withdraws from the embrace and says only

> Frate –
> Non far: chè tu sei ombra ed ombra vedi.[52]

The other accepts the admonition with the words

> la quantite
> Puote veder dell'amor che a te mi scalda,
> Quando dismento nostra vanitate
> Trattando l'ombre come cosa salda.[53]

The idea you observe, received rather more development than Homer's; but only in the direction of the external reality which it intends; it is not a fancy, and it is not detached from the external facts.

My intention in this lecture was to present adequate reasons for treating Donne as wholly a man of his own time, and in doing so to define generally his time in its points of contrast with the Middle Ages. I believe that Jesuitism is one of the most significant phenomena of Donne's time, for the purpose of definition: and I tried to show that in Jesuitism the centre of philosophical interest is deflected from what it was for the Middle Ages, and that this marks an important alteration of human attitudes. Donne throughout his life was in contact with Jesuitism; directly in his early family life, later by his studies, and not least by his battle with the Jesuits. For you can hardly fight anyone for very long without employing his weapons and using his methods; and to fight a man with ideas means adapting your ideas to his mind. Conflict is contact. The air which Donne breathed was infused with Jesuitism. I have so far tried only to establish that Donne in his writings illustrates one form of the psychologism which arose with Jesuitism – I do not say solely in Jesuit form, or through the medium of Jesuitism.

My first lecture intended to form a definition, or less strictly to present a view of metaphysical poetry, starting from that of Donne's age and looking for felt resemblances elsewhere, which could include all the kinds of poetry which I myself feel to be metaphysical. In this second lecture I intended to arrive at a definition or view of Donne's peculiar type of metaphysical poetry, and to do this I had to place him in history. We shall have to see how far the connection of Donne's contemporaries can be based on identity under this definition, how far (as I warned you we must be prepared sometimes to find it) the resemblance is verbal or exterior, and how far we must go in framing variant but related definitions. I think we shall find that this general law of the supersession of ontology by psychology holds good everywhere, to the degree in which the various poets are distinct enough to merit definition at all. But before considering some of Donne's contemporaries, when we shall investigate their common tricks in the use of language, I wish next time to contrast the school of Donne with the school of Dante in the particular, but important and illuminating respect of their expressed or implied theories of the nature of human and of divine love.

There is one reservation to be made, in considering the argument of the preceding lecture. In treating Donne's psychological attitude toward ideas

and emotions I have not meant to suggest that he was the direct ancestor, or even the collateral ancestor, of later poets. You must not ask me to apply my remarks on Donne *tel quel* to Browning: and I should prefer you not to ask me, not yet at any rate, where is the psychological element in Collins's "Ode to Evening."[54] I do not say that this new attitude accounts for everything, as I should by no means say that Aquinas accounts for everything in the thirteenth century. But it is surely one of the differences between the new world and the old; and in its various mutations it either accounts for or is related to the causes which account for, a great many of the phenomena even of our own time. The work of Marcel Proust, for instance, could hardly have appeared without it.[55] But we must always be on guard to avoid confusing resemblances with influences. And even influences, we must remember, occur very frequently through misunderstanding; and some writers have exercised a great influence on account of the facility with which they can be misinterpreted. There is some resemblance between the fruit which St. Augustine stole from an orchard in his boyhood, and the cherries which Rousseau flung at Mademoiselle de Graffenried:[56] and these in turn bear some likeness to the forbidden fruit which Mr. Frank Harris has, I am told, recently preserved for posterity in a limited edition, privately printed.[57] But we are not to hold St. Augustine responsible for Mr. Harris.

On the other hand I insist on a general line of descent from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth. It would be traced partly in a history of ideas, in which Locke would play the leading part; and partly in a History of Sensibility. Crashaw, as we shall see, was immensely affected by St. Theresa: Crashaw influenced Pope in a poem in which already are the germs of eighteenth-century sentiment – the "Heloise to Abelard."[58] There was sentimentality before Rousseau, and sentiment reached the nineteenth century through other media as well as through Rousseau. In much English prose, even the finest, of the nineteenth century, I find more than a trace of intellectual psychologism, and just the faintest, undefinable perfume of femininity. I find it in Newman and Francis Bradley as well as in Ruskin and Pater. Or it is as if such prose had been written in a low fever; there is a slight temperature to it.[59] Would it be excessive to attempt to trace the influence of St. Theresa to Mr. Lytton Strachey? I think not. But the point of these remarks is to remind you how useful a stimulant such speculation may be if it is carried on under the control of the *sensus communis*.

NOTES

1. TSE first wrote of his objection to Ramsay's thesis in "An Italian Critic on Donne and Crashaw," his review of Praz's *Secentismo e marinismo in Inghilterra*: "we think that Signor Praz's view is nearer to accuracy: that Donne was medieval in his education and in his taste, but Renaissance in mind and in sensibility" (598).

2. Izaak Walton (1593-1683), Donne's first biographer, states that when Donne was admitted to Lincoln's Inn at age seventeen to study law, "he gave great testimonies of his wit, his learning, and of his improvement in that profession; which never served him for other use than an ornament and self-satisfaction." *The Complete Angler & the Lives*, 190.

3. In five appendices, Ramsay lists the authors cited by Donne in *Bianthanatos* (1646), *Pseudo-Martyr* (1610), *Ignatius his Conclave* (1611), *Sermons* (1634-60), and *Essays in Divinity* (1651).

4*. TSE later penciled a note in the bottom margin: "Though I believe that Hooker's philosophy was much more 'mediaeval' than Donne's; but I shall deal with this elsewhere." While his lectures were in progress, TSE wrote to Herbert Read on 27 Feb about a proposal, later abandoned, to bring out a series of monographs on major critics: "I should rather like to deal with Hooker myself if he were included" (*L3* 89).

5. Donne's Thomistic influences are most apparent in the early prose, but he also quotes Aquinas frequently in *Sermons*. He quotes and refers to Franciscan theologian St. Bonaventure (Giovanni di Fidanza, 1221-74) in *Biathanatos* and in *Sermons* (*Ser* VII, 308; IX, 128). He quotes St. Augustine (354-430) more than any of the Fathers in his sermons and other prose works (*Ser* X, 376-86).

6. Walton writes: "Being to undertake this search, [Donne] believed the Cardinal Bellarmine to be the best defender of the Roman cause, and therefore betook himself to the examination of his reasons." *The Complete Angler & the Lives*, 191. Father Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621), an Italian Jesuit and professor of theology at Louvain and Rome, was the author of *Disputations on the Controversies of the Christian Faith* (1586-93). Dr. Anthony Rudd (1549-1615), a fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, was the dean of Gloucester from 1584 to 1594.

7. Donne quotes from and refers to the works of Martin Luther (1483-1546), leader of the German Reformation, in *Pseudo-Martyr*, *Essays in Divinity*, and *Sermons*; John Calvin (1509-64), the French Protestant theologian and reformer, is frequently quoted and praised in *Sermons* as an expositor and interpreter of Scripture; Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560), the German scholar and reformer), is frequently cited in the *Sermons* for his *Loci communes rerum theologicarum* (1521); Peter Martyr Vermigli (1500-62), an Italian convert to Protestantism and a Calvinist reformer, published his commentaries and tracts in *Locorum communium theologicorum* (1580-83), which Donne cites in *Biathanatos*, *Essays in Divinity*, and *Sermons*.

8. Cajetan (Tommaso de Vio Gaetani, 1469-1534), head of the Dominican order, worked against Luther in Germany and wrote biblical commentaries to which Donne refers in *Sermons* and *Essays in Divinity*. Jacobus Valdesius (Diego de Valdés), Donne's contemporary, was the author of *De dignitate regum regnorumque Hispaniae* (1602), which Donne read and cited in *Pseudo-Martyr* and in a letter to Robert Cotton. See Edmund Gosse, *The Life and Letters of John Donne*, vol 1 (London: Heinemann, 1899), 123-25. Francisco de Victoria (1480-1546), Dominican leader of the neo-Thomist school, is cited in *Biathanatos*.

9. The German humanist Nicolaus de Cusa ("Cusanus," 1401-64), a Neoplatonist and Cardinal of the Roman Church, demanded reforms, attacked the supremacy of the papacy, and advocated the transcendence of reason by mystical contemplation. He is referred to in *Essays in Divinity*, where Donne expresses further interest in the Cabalistic speculations of the Italian humanist Pico della Mirandola and his followers, Johann Reuchlin and F. Zorgi ("Francis George").

10†. TSE later crossed out the following sentence: "It was the learned equivalent of the cross-word puzzle."

11. Elizabeth Rastell (1482-1538)

12. In 1504-05 More translated into English the Latin biography of Italian humanist Pico della Mirandola (1463-94), written by Pico's nephew ca. 1496, and published it in 1510. Donne alludes parenthetically to the biography in *Essays in Divinity*.

13. John Colet (1467-1519), Oxford reformer and Dean of St. Paul's (1504-19), was the author of two Latin treatises (later translated into English as *Two Treatises on the Hierarchies of Dionysius*, 1869) on the Greek texts the *Celestial Hierarchy* and the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* by Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite, known as Pseudo-Dionysius, a sixth-century Syrian Christian writer who used Neoplatonism to interpret theology. His works were once attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite, a first-century Athenian Christian converted by St. Paul (Acts 17:34).

14. John Rastell (1475-1536), a wealthy printer, lawyer, and dramatist, was drawn into religious controversy in 1530 with the publication of his *A Newe Boke of Purgatory*, a defense of Catholic doctrine, but he was answered so persuasively by a young Protestant, John Frith, that he converted to Protestantism.

15. John Heywood (1497-1578), court musician and playwright, was the author of epigrams, songs, poems, and at least six "interludes," or dramatic farces, including *The Play of Love* (1533) and *The Play of the Weather* (1533). He married John Rastell's granddaughter, Elizabeth Rastell, and their daughter, Elizabeth Heywood (1540-1632) married John Donne (d. 1576), father of the poet.

16. Jasper Heywood (1535-98) was Lord of Misrule at Lincoln's Inn when he translated Seneca's *Troas* (1559) and fellow at All Souls College when he translated *Thyestes* (1560) and *Hercules furens* (1561). He then withdrew to Rome, became a Jesuit in 1562, and returned to England in 1581 as Papal Legate when Donne was eight years old.

17. James I, convinced that Donne had a divine calling, determined that he should have a church preferment or none at all, but Donne steadfastly resisted the calling for five or six years until 1612, when he announced his intention of taking holy orders.

18. Edmund Gosse points out in *The Life and Letters of John Donne* that Donne made one of "the very rare Elizabethan references" (1:41) to Dante in his Fourth Satire: "My precious soule began, the wretchednesse / Of suiters at court to mourne, and a trance / Like his, who dreamt he saw hell, did advance / It selfe on mee, Such men as he saw there, / I saw at court" (Grierson 1:164).

19. Jonson praises Donne in *Epigrams* (1616), "XXIII. – To John Donne" and in *Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden* (1619).

20. The English humanist Roger Ascham, a classical scholar and Ciceronian Latinist, wrote *The Scholemaster* (1570). Through a bequest from his aunt in 1919, TSE owned the four-volume

edition (many pages uncut) of *The Whole Works of Roger Ascham* (London: John Russell Smith, 1864/65).

21. Senecals: Elizabethan dramatists who were influenced by Seneca in form, language, or style.

22. Marlowe published verse translations of the first book of Lucan's *Pharsalia* and of Ovid's *Amores*, which TSE praised for the translation's "strength and energy" in "The Local Flavour" (177). Chapman translated Hesiod's *Georgics*, and TSE recommended his translations of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* to students of his Extension Lectures in 1918 (1.758). Jonson translated Horace's *Ars poetica*, *Vitae rusticae laudes* and two odes, an epigram of Martial, and a fragment of Petronius Arbiter.

23. Though Thomas Coryate suggested, in a facetious letter from India of 8 Nov 1615, that Donne was among those poets and playwrights that gathered at the Mermaid Tavern in Bread Street from about 1612 to 1615, Gosse contends that the letter "is the principal, and indeed the only, authority existing for the statement that Donne attended the meetings at the Mermaid." *The Life and Letters of John Donne,* 2:86. Nineteenth-century critics, however, had fostered an improbable tradition that Marlowe, Shakespeare, Beaumont, Fletcher, Jonson, and other Elizabethan-Jacobean dramatists had been members of this thriving "Mermaid Club" and that Shakespeare and Jonson had engaged in their "wit-combats" there. It is likely that the only dramatists whom Donne met at the Mermaid were Jonson and possibly Fletcher.

24. TSE alludes to *Inferno* IV.141, where in the first circle of Hell Dante encounters "Seneca morale" ("Seneca the moralist") (*DC1* 44-45). In his *Sermons* Donne frequently quotes phrases from the philosophical treatises of Seneca, often referring to him as the "Morall man" (*Ser* III, 281) and as "the Patriarch, and Oracle of Morall men" (*Ser* III, 406).

25. Shortly after Donne's ordination in Jan 1615, King James made him his chaplain and commanded him to preach before the court.

26†. TSE later crossed out the following: "and it is on these grounds that he has advised me to take a spiritual director." He alludes to his public controversy with Murry on the nature of Classicism and Romanticism, begun in the pages of the *Adelphi* and the *Criterion* in 1923. TSE likely refers to personal conversation on the matter of Jesuitism and Classicism; in "The 'Classical' Revival," published in the Feb and Mar issues of the *Adelphi* while TSE's lectures were in progress, Murry describes him as an "unregenerate and incomplete romantic" and suggests an unbridgeable division between his classical principles and his romantic sensibility in *TWL*: "To order such an experience on classical principles," Murry continues, "is almost beyond human powers. It might conceivably be done, by an act of violence, by joining the Catholic Church." *Adelphi*, 3 (Feb 1926), 592-93.

27†. TSE later crossed out the following: ", and excessively Romantic."

28. Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556; canonized 1622), founder of the Society of Jesus in 1540 and author of *Spiritual Exercises* (1548), confirms in his autobiography that he read only chivalric romances in his youth, particularly *Amadis de Gaula* (1508), a romance about the knightly exploits of Amadis that was popular in France and Spain prior to the appearance of Miguel de Cervantes's *Don Quixote* (1605-15).

29. In *Les Origines de la compagnie de Jésus; Ignace et Lainez* [The Origins of the Society of Jesus: Ignatius and Lainez] (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1898), Herrmann Müller explores in detail the similarities of the six steps of a Jesuit novitiate's spiritual progress to specific Mohammedan practices.

30. TSE discussed the two-volume study by French Thomistic philosopher Étienne Gilson (1884-1978) later in 1926 in his review of Maurice de Wulf's *History of Medieval Philosophy* (870).

31. *sensus communis*: "common sense"; in classical rhetoric, the term refers to the set of unstated assumptions and unexamined judgments shared by a culture.

32. TSE alludes to Kant's description of his approach to the intuition of objects as being analogous to a Copernican revolution, in the Preface to the second edition of *Critique of Pure Reason* (1787).

33. Descartes employs the wax metaphor in "Meditation II"; his belief that we know not objects but our ideas of those objects is explicitly argued in "Meditation VI," from which TSE quotes later in the present lecture.

34. TSE thought Nietzsche the source of the unidentified epigraph ("Nichts ist aussen, nichts ist innen, denn was aussen ist, ist innen") for the first chapter of Hermann Hesse's *Blick ins Chaos: Drei Aufsätze* (1920), from which he quoted in the notes to *TWL*; however it was adapted from Goethe's late poem "Epirrhema" (1820).

35. TSE refers to a recent article by I. A. (Ivor Armstrong) Richards (1893-1979), then lecturer at Cambridge and a member of the audience for the Clark Lectures. In "A Background for Contemporary Poetry," Richards praised TSE for having effected "a complete severance between his poetry and *all* beliefs" in *TWL*, a poem that Richards believed to portray a disease of the modern sensibility. The blame for this disease, he argues, "lies with man's habit of expecting the objects of his emotions to be also their justification. We expect the things we love or hate to be in themselves love-worthy or hate-worthy . . . The justification, or the reverse, of any attitude lies, not in the object, but in itself." *Criterion*, 3 (July 1925), 521.

36. TSE evidently made an ad-lib transition to the following quotation from Descartes to illustrate his statements above. In "Donne in our Time," he later prefaced the same quotation with the following remark: "The kind of religious faith expressed in Donne's religious writings is wholly consistent with the employment in his poetry of the many scraps of various philosophies which appear there. His attitude towards philosophic notions in his poetry may be put by saying that he was more interested in *ideas* themselves as objects than in the *truth* of ideas. In an odd way, he almost anticipates the philosopher of the coming age, Descartes, as in his sixth Meditation." In *A Garland for John Donne,* ed. Theodore Spencer (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1931), 11.

37. *Trans*: "I easily understand, I say, that the imagination could be thus constituted if it is true that body exists; and because I can discover no other convenient mode of explaining it, I conjecture with probability that body does exist; but this is only with probability, and although I examine all things with care, I nevertheless do not find that from this distinct idea of corporeal nature, which I have in my imagination, I can derive any argument from which there will necessarily be deduced the existence of the body." From "Meditation VI," *Œuvres choisies de Descartes* (Paris: Garnier, 1865), 128. In *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, vol 1, trans. Elizabeth S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross (Cambridge UP, 1931), 186-87.

38. TSE was under the mistaken impression that Richards's assertion in "A Background for Contemporary Poetry" (see above, n.35) was to be found in *Principles of Literary Criticism* (London: Kegan, Paul, Trubner, 1924), from which he quotes (264).

39*. TSE later drew a pencil line from "impulses" to the bottom margin for a holograph notation: "Impulses are special twists given to our potentialities by Beauty, Ugliness etc."

40. TSE ironically alludes to the fact that, as an undergraduate, Hulme had been sent down twice from St. John's College, Cambridge. Hulme held that in the Renaissance the categories of the religious attitude, including Original Sin, were "reversed" by the "pseudo-categories" of the humanist attitude, including belief in the fundamental goodness of man: "I hold . . . that the way of thinking about the world and man, the conception of sin, and the categories which ultimately make up the religious attitude, are the *true* categories and the *right* way of thinking. . . . I hold the religious conception of ultimate values to be right, the humanist wrong." *Speculations*, 70.

41. The Jewish philosopher Maimonides attempted a synthesis of Aristotelian philosophy and the biblical texts of Hebrew theology. Donne's direct allusion to the Muslim philosopher Averroes, known for his commentaries on Aristotle and Plato's *Republic*, appears in his letter of 1612 to Sir Henry Goodyere. See Gosse, *The Life and Letters of John Donne*, 2:8.

42. *telles quelles*: as they are, without modification.

43. TSE likens Donne's frequent recourse to the authority of the Pseudo-Dionysius to that of German Dominican philosopher and mystic Johannes Eckhardt ("Meister Eckhart," ca. 1260-ca. 1328), who also drew heavily upon the mystical theologian's works.

44. Luis de Granada (1504-88) was best known as a Spanish devotional writer and author of numerous mystical treatises. St. Philip Neri (1515-95), Italian priest and mystic, founded the Congregation of the Oratorians in Rome in 1575. The Church of St. Philip Neri in Arundel was commissioned by the Duke of Norfolk in 1868. TSE drew a pencil line from Neri's name to the margin, where he wrote "also Brompton Oratory," London's second-largest Roman Catholic Church, in which a chapel is named for him. Praz asked doubtfully in his letter of 31 Jan 1927: "Are you right in including S. Philip Neri among the Spanish mystics?" The erroneous association may have come from TSE's reading of Donne's *Ignatius his Conclave*, in which Ignatius treats his old friend Neri with contempt; Neri is the final adversary that Ignatius must confront in a satire in which Donne identifies the Jesuits generally with Spanish policy.

45. *Hamlet* II.ii.503. The First Player uses the unusual phrase, which provokes responses from both Hamlet and Polonius, to describe Queen Hecuba: "But who – ah, woe! – had seen the mobled queen . . ."; "mobled": muffled.

46. "The Good-Morrow," ll. 1-7 (*MLP* 1).

47. Racine, *Phèdre* II.v.645-48. *Trans*: "What were you doing then? Why did he gather / The flow'r of Greece, and leave Hippolytus?" *The Dramatic Works of Jean Racine*, vol 2, trans. R. B. Boswell (London: George Bell, 1897), 231. TSE referred to the same passage in "Marivaux," where he claimed that its "analysis of love . . . is marginal comedy" (5).

48. TSE alludes to Oedipus's speech after having blinded himself in guilt over parricide and incest in *King Oedipus* (ll.1369-1415).

49. Arnold bases the setting for his "The Strayed Reveller" on Circe's Palace in Book X of the *Odyssey*. In the typescript, the phrase "overboard and been drowned" has been underlined in pencil, with a marginal note in Herbert Read's hand, "Wrong death!" At the end of Book X, the drunken Elpenor toppled to his death from the roof of Circe's palace, whereupon his soul went down to Hades. Odysseus then encounters the shade of Elpenor in Book XI, The Book of the Dead (ll. 52-80). TSE confuses Elpenor with Palinurus, who in the *Aeneid* is lulled to sleep and pushed overboard by Phorbas. Palinurus woke and swam for four days, only to be murdered by natives when he reached shore, and Aeneas met his shade when he visited the Underworld.

50. TSE evidently cites the line from memory or translates from the Greek text of his signed but unmarked copy (King's) of *The Odyssey of Homer*, ed. John B. Owen (New York: American Book Company, 1859).

51. TSE discusses the nature and relationship of Meinong's *Annahme* (literally "assumption") and Bradley's "floating ideas" in his dissertation (1.343).

52. *Purgatorio* XXI.131-32. *Trans*: "'Brother, do not so, for thou art a shade, and a shade thou seest'" (*DC2* 267). *Read*: "'Frate, / non far, chè tu se' ombra, ed ombra vedi.'"

53. *Purgatorio* XXI.133-36. *Trans*: "Now canst thou comprehend the measure of the love which warms me toward thee, when I forget our nothingness, and treat shades as a solid thing.") (*DC2* 266-67). *Read*: "'Or puoi la quantitate / comprender dell'amor ch'a te mi scalda, / quando dismento nostra vanitate, / trattando l'ombre come cosa salda.'" TSE accurately quoted these lines when he used them as the epigraph for *Ara Vos Prec* (1919) but consistently misquoted them ("Puote veder") when he made it the dedication passage for Jean Verdenal in *Poems 1909-1925* and *Collected Poems 1909-1935*, corrected in subsequent editions.

54. "Ode to Evening" (1746, 1748) by William Collins; TSE may allude to the fact that after Collins became insane, there was a critical tendency to search for psychological signs of madness in his odes.

55. William Empson, then a first-year student at Magdalene College, Cambridge recalls TSE discussing at length Scott Moncrieff's translation of Proust at the second of the weekly morning coffee-circles that he held with undergraduates throughout the Clark Lectures. "The Style of the Master," *T. S. Eliot: A Symposium*, eds. Richard March and Tambimuttu (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1949), 36-37. Later in 1926, in "Mr. Read and M. Fernandez," TSE concurred with both Herbert Read and Ramon Fernandez about the lack of moral value or hierarchy in the work of Proust, "or more exactly, to his value simply as a milestone, as a point of demarcation" (835).

56. St. Augustine describes his theft in the *Confessions*, Book II, chapter 4, confessing that he stole pears from a tree not out of need but for sheer enjoyment of the theft and sin. Rousseau describes his mischievousness with sexual overtones in Book Four of his *Confessions*, though he drops the cherries not on Mademoiselle de Graffenried but on her companion, Mademoiselle Galley.

57. Frank Harris (1856-1931), Welsh novelist, journalist, biographer, and pornographer, had published two volumes of his four-volume *My Life and Loves* (Paris: privately printed, 1922-27), in which he traces his sexual awakening and early sexual encounters.

58. In Pope's "Eloisa to Abelard" (1717), Eloisa contrasts her own distracted state to that of the "blameless" brides of Christ, borrowing directly from Crashaw's "Description of a Religious House" to characterize their untroubled religious life.

59. TSE similarly diagnosed the disequilibrium of English prose after Thomas Carlyle – "there is usually some exaggeration, some peculiar emotional limitation, as it were a slightly feverish temperature" – in his 1923 *Vanity Fair* essay, "Contemporary English Prose" (449).

Lecture III

Donne and the *Trecento*

The channels through which the Italian poetry of the *trecento* derives from the Provençal is too well known for me to have any need to review it. I am no Provençal scholar, and anything that I could say would be obtained from translations or from credible authorities. The only point of which I have any need to remind you is the alteration of point of view which takes place, between the Provençal school and the group of Dante, in the matter of love.[1] The distinction is briefly put by Remy de Gourmont in an interesting if not wholly satisfactory little book entitled *Dante, Béatrice et la poésie amoureuse*.[2] Speaking of Provençal society, he says:

> Pour aimer, il fallait être marié et aimer en dehors du mariage. Pas plus qu'entre époux, entre jeunes gens libres l'amour n'était admis. Afin d'avoir droit aux hommages des chevaliers, il faut que la jeune fille se marie. Ce que nous laissent constamment entrevoir les poètes provençaux, c'est une dame noble, belle, puissante, entourée d'une cour de jeunes chevaliers, parmi lesquels il lui était permis, sinon dûment ordonné, d'en distinguer un et de se l'attacher. Le lien formé, ils se devaient mutuellement amour sous peine de déchéance; rien ne pouvait les séparer que, momentanément, la mort. C'était la fidélité dans l'adultère.
>
> La dame provençale n'est nullement "angélisée." On ne la craint pas, on la désire.
>
> La nouvelle école florentine . . . devait modifier profondément la conception de l'amour, et par conséquent les mœurs. L'amour des poètes devient pur, presque impersonnel; son objet n'est plus une femme, mais la beauté, la féminité personnifiée dans une créature idéale. Aucune idée de mariage ni de possession ne les hante. . . . L'amour a tous les caractères d'un culte, dont le sonnet et la canzone sont les hymnes.
>
> C'est une date dans l'histoire de l'évolution des sentiments humains; c'est un pas vers la vérité et un progrès social immense.[3]

I quote this admirable summary to emphasise the vast difference.

The Dantesque attitude toward women should not be qualified as "chivalrous," or buried under the common obscuration of the term "mediaeval."

The Provençal attitude is perhaps the more "chivalrous"; it pertains to a society aristocratic and worldly rather than scholarly, devoted to the art of music, a beautiful little enclave of paganism – though an enclave which comprehended a large part of modern France. Aesthetes of love and war, they had the satisfaction, denied to most aesthetes, of living out their aestheticism in a social existence. Between this society and that of Dante I do not wish to insinuate any judgment; though of course the latter produced the greater poetry. Indeed, the three attitudes towards love – of the Provençal, of the Italian, of the English seventeenth century – represent differences in the human spirit too wide for judgment; they belong to those differences which are reincarnated in different human beings every day, placing insuperable barriers between some of every handful of us. I judge them only, as a literary critic, by their literary fruits.

There are, as I tried to say in the first lecture, essentially two ways in which poetry can add to human experience. One is by perceiving and recording accurately the world – of both sense and feeling – as given at any moment; the other by extending the frontiers of this world. The first is the first in the order of generation – you find it in Homer; and I do not say that it is necessarily second in the order of value. A new and wider and loftier world, such as that into which Dante will introduce you, must be built upon a solid foundation of the old tangible world; it will not descend like Jacob's ladder. Among the poets who have thus extended reality – and I will admit that they are those who interest me the most – I place Dante first absolutely, and Baudelaire first in recent times. Among those who have defined reality as it is, for various reasons I find it impossible to assign rank: I should certainly include Homer – yes, the Homer of the *Odyssey* also – Catullus, Chaucer. But, again as always in literary criticism, one must distinguish, but one cannot dissect. Any poet, almost, may be seen under the opposite aspect; every poet may exhibit something of both. Some may be called mixed; some may be called muddled. For there is a difference between fusion and confusion.

I have introduced this parenthesis in order to forestall the prejudice, dealing with the metaphysical poetry of Dante and his age, that all this stuff – the *Vita Nuova* or the sonnets and *canzoni* and *ballate* of the two Guidos – is fantasy and foolery. Not many persons, perhaps, will admit that this is what they think, but so many have read of Paolo and Francesca, and read it wrong,[4] and so few have read the *Paradiso* and read it right, that this must be the attitude of a very large number. And I wish to insist that

this poetry is not the quaint fashion of a primitive age, pre-Raphaelite, given to visions and Benozzo Gozzoli processions up to heaven,[5] but the product of men who felt and thought both clearly and beyond the ordinary frontiers of mind. These were men of highly trained intellects, who also had their feet very firmly on the ground – a rather muddy ground of politics, amours and gang fighting. In short, they represent a civilisation in some respects superior to our own, and superior to that of the world of Donne. Their syntax and choice of words affirm their superiority. You cannot live on a high plane and indulge yourself in verbiage.

I have mentioned a small book by Remy de Gourmont. In recommending it I would add one caution. Gourmont's purpose is to prove that the Beatrice of Dante is practically a pure fabrication – if indeed the very name Beatrice was not chosen solely because of its meaning. Against any who assert that the *Vita Nuova* is a literal chronicle of an early passion, his claim is abundantly vindicated, though for any reader of intelligence such vindication should be superfluous. Gourmont exposes the arbitrary and symbolical chronology, and makes successful appeal to the similarity of Dante's visions to those of other vision literature such as the *Shepherd of Hermas*.[6] But Gourmont must always be taken with reservation. A brilliant literary critic, he was no philosopher; and being no philosopher, he was filled with all sorts of philosophical prejudices – about sex, for instance – after all, he lived in the time of Walter Pater.[7] When we read the book in question, we may receive the impression that the *Vita Nuova* is a dry and lifeless allegory. (The very word "allegory" is enough to condemn anything, to many people!) No such thing. The *Vita Nuova* is to my thinking a record of actual experiences reshaped into a particular form. This is indemonstrable. It is a kind of experience possible to a particular mental type, which persons of this type will always recognise. The emotions and sentiments, for instance, which Dante records as experienced at the age of nine, are not at all incredible; they are possible at an even earlier age, though I do not assert that a young person of nine would be able to formulate them consciously in those words.[8] I do not reject the part of allegory. Allegory itself may be only a mode of expression of a mind passionately eager to find order and significance in the world – though it may find order or set order in ways which we have come to neglect.

The causes by which took place so profound a change of mind as that between the Provençal and the *trecento* as illustrated by the *Vita Nuova* – profound and apparently so sudden – are obscure; and most historians

seem to content themselves with marking the change without accounting for it. I venture therefore timidly as well as tentatively to suggest that the poets of the *trecento* were (and the Provençals were not) in the direct current of European thought then flowing. We have, I believe, evidence of a high state of education among the choicer Provençal nobility; higher probably than in any part of Europe at that time; and a nobility which reads Ovid and Virgil is worthy of notice at any time. But apparently their reading was primarily classical – as much of the Latin classics as was then accessible. It seems a curious little Latin renaissance in the twelfth century. But the current of living thought was then flowing through the Church; and possibly certain heresies flourishing in Provence may have tended to isolate this part of France from the rest of Europe. The generation of Dante was nourished on mediaeval Latin culture. And no one who has read even a little of the Latin of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries can doubt that the delight in ideas, the dialectical subtlety, the intensity with which ideas were felt, and the clarity and precision of the expression, came partly from this source.

There is a type of religious mysticism which found expression in the twelfth century, and which is taken up into the system of Aquinas. Its origin is in the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle 1072b and elsewhere, and in the *Nichomachaean Ethics*, and it is the opposite of Bergsonism.[9] You know how the Absolute of Bergson is arrived at: by a turning back on the path of thought, by divesting one's mind of the apparatus of distinction and analysis, by plunging into the flow of immediate experience. For the twelfth century, the divine vision or enjoyment of God could only be attained by a process in which the analytic intellect took part; it was through and by and beyond discursive thought that man could arrive at beatitude. This was the form of mysticism consummated in Dante's time. It is very different from the mysticism of Ignatius, Theresa and St. John of the Cross, who were romantics, and from that of Eckhardt, who was a heretic. In its own way it was perfect. But the human mind, when it comes to a terminus, hastens to look up the next train for almost anywhere. In the fourteenth century Meister Eckhardt and his followers – appropriately, in Germany – reasserted the God of the Abyss; the God of Mr. D. H. Lawrence.[10†]

I wish to linger a little over this twelfth-century mysticism, not because we are interested in mysticism, but because we cannot get away from it. There is always some type of mysticism about, whether that of Mr. Russell, or Mr. Lawrence, or Mr. Murry; the number of types is limited, and it is

possible and useful to be able to distinguish them. It will help us, presently, in contrasting the *Vita Nuova* with "The Extasie" of Donne.

The most interesting example of a twelfth-century mystic that I know, an example which should throw considerable light upon Dante, is Richard of St. Victor. Richard was, like the greater philosopher Hugh of St. Victor, a Scotchman who became prior of the Victorine monastery, the Riccardo of *Paradiso*, Canto X:[11]

> Che a considerar fu più che viro.
> Who in contemplation was more than man.[12]

His works occupy the greater part of one volume in Migne's *Patrologia* – no small space;[13] they do not appear to be very well known, and I cannot myself profess acquaintance with any but a small part of them. But the most important for our purpose, is the *De Gratia Contemplationis*, called the *Benjamin Major*.[14] This is a treatise on the operations and stages of the mind in proceeding toward the beatific vision. You will observe some resemblance – no doubt wholly coincidental – to the classifications of Indian mystical systems. You will also observe that it is wholly impersonal – as impersonal as a handbook of hygiene – and contains no biographical element whatever; nothing that could be called emotional or sensational. In which it differs from the works of the Spanish mystics of the sixteenth century. And finally you may agree with me that it is written in a clear, simple and economical style – if, that is, you admit a style of Latin which is neither Cicero, Tacitus nor Petronius. I will quote a passage from the part of the work named in which he is endeavouring to distinguish between cogitation, meditation and contemplation – the three stages of mental progress.[15†]

> Cogitatio per devia quaeque lento pede, sine respectu perventionis, passim huc illucque vagatur. Meditatio per ardua saepe et aspera ad directionis finem cum magna animi industria nititur. Contemplatio libero volatu quocunque eam fert impetus mira agilitate circumfertur.Cogitatio serpit, meditatio incedit et ut multum currit. Contemplatio autem omnia circumvolat, et cum voluerit se in summis librat. Cogitatio est sine labore et fructu. In meditatione est labor cum fructu. Contemplatio permanet sine labore cum fructu. In cogitatione evagatio, in meditatione investigatio, in contemplatione admiratio. Ex imaginatione cogitatio, ex ratione meditatio, ex intelligentia contemplatio. Ecce tria ista, imaginatio, ratio,

> intelligentia. Intelligentia obtinet supremum locum, imaginatio infimum, ratio medium. Omnia quae subjacent sensui inferiori, necesse est ea etiam subjacere sensui superiori. Unde constat quia cuncta quae comprehenduntur ab imaginatione, ea etiam aliaque multa quae supra jam sunt comprehendi a ratione. Similiter ea quae imaginatio vel ratio comprehendunt, sub intelligentia cadunt, et ea etiam quae illae comprehendere non possunt. Vide ergo contemplarionis radius, quam late se expandat, qui omnia lustrat.[16]

Repetitious and monotonous it may seem. But on examination you find that every phrase makes what went before it a little more intelligible; there is not a word wasted. Furthermore Richard is very sparing of tropes and figures: there is only the main allegory running through the treatise, the comparison of the stages of the mind to the parts of the ark of the covenant – an allegory [which] causes no confusion. It is prose which seems to me to satisfy the primary demands of writing, that is, to write what you think in the words in which you think it, adding no embellishment; to avoid metaphors and figures of speech, and to keep your emotions out of it. (For if an emotion has enough force, it will make its way through in spite of everything: if it has not, it is much better away).

I should remark also that the method and the goal seem to me essentially the same as with Aquinas and Dante: the divine contemplation, and the development and subsumption of emotion and feeling through intellect into the vision of God. Thus St. Thomas: "it results evidently that it is only in the divine vision that intelligent beings can find the true felicity" (Gilson: *St. Thomas*; in *Les Moralistes Chrétiens*).[17]

In passing, I wish to draw as sharply as possible the difference between this mysticism of Richard of St. Victor, which is the mysticism also of St. Thomas Aquinas and of Dante, and the mysticism of the Spaniards which as we shall see later, is the mysticism of Crashaw and the Society of Jesus. The Aristotelian-Victorine-Dantesque mysticism is ontological; the Spanish mysticism is psychological. The first is what I call classical, the second romantic.[18†]

When Mr. George Santayana says that the mystic is the true epicurean,[19] he is saying what is true of the Spanish mystic rather than and in distinction to any other. It is no accident, in this connexion, that the town of Avila near Madrid has two glories: that of having given birth to St. Theresa and that of having given birth to Mr. George Santayana of Cambridge, Massachusetts.

And of the Spanish mystic, we can easily prove Mr. Santayana right. For does not St. John of the Cross say (Truc, 145):

> Toutes les délices et toutes les douceurs des créatures ne sont que des peines et des amertumes très grandes, lorsqu'on les compare avec les délices et les douceurs de Dieu. Celui-là donc ne mérite que des tourments, qui s'abandonne aux plaisirs du monde.[20]

And look at the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola (based, according to M. Herrmann Müller, on Mohammedan patterns):[21]

> [Contemplate - (1) Your apartment faintly lighted by the last rays of day, or the feeble light of a lamp; your bed which you will never leave except to be laid in your coffin; all the objects which surround you and seem to say, You leave us for ever! (2) The persons who will surround you: your servants, sad and silent; a weeping family, bidding you a last adieu; the minister of religion, praying near you and suggesting pious affections to you. (3) Yourself stretched on a bed of pain, losing by degrees your senses and the free use of your faculties, struggling violently against death, which comes to tear your soul from the body and drag it before the tribunal of God. (4) At your side the devils, who redouble their efforts, to destroy you; your good angel, who assists you for the last time with his holy inspirations.][22]

Is this not a spiritual haschisch, a drugging of the emotions, rather than, as with Richard of St. Victor, an intellectual preparation for spiritual contemplation?

In the next lecture I shall revert to the relation of the mental food of Dante to Dante's style, and the relation of Donne's mental food to his style. I will only observe at the moment that such prose as that of St. Victor seems to me an admirable influence for the formation of style either in prose or verse. For the writing of English prose or verse, I should include it with Aristotle, *The Drapier's Letters*, *The Principles of Logic*, and the first volume of the *Principia Mathematica*.[23] In any case, I am not (please note) concerned with the question of any actual influence of Richard on Dante: though Dante certainly knew and appreciated his work. See the *Epistola* to Can Grande, [which] refers to *De Contemplatione*.[24] I cite the former only as a specimen of the sort of thinking and writing which went to the formation of Dante's mind and Dante's style.

In the passage from Remy de Gourmont quoted, it was observed that the love of the *trecentisti* was free from any notion of possession; and though this statement is much too absolute, it is generally true that the *trecentisti* are more concerned with the contemplation of the beloved object than with the feelings and sensations of union. What they record are the feelings and sensations of the one who contemplates the beloved.

Chi è questa che vien, ch'ogni uom la mira,
Che fa tremar di claritate l'aere?

(or, *che fe de clarità l'aer tremare*) says Cavalcanti in his best known sonnet: "who makes the air all tremulous with light" translates Rossetti;[25] and observe furthermore that this line is no mere compliment or flattering figure of speech, but an exact statement of the visual impression made by the beloved upon the lover – upon one type of lover at all events – which doubtless has its physiological explanation. And this is very significant. In the best of the erotic verse of Dante, Guinizelli, Cavalcanti and Cino you will find nothing of the merely courtly or eulogistic, no descriptions of the object, no attempt to express the emotions and sensations for their own sake, but solely an attempt to suggest the beauty and dignity of the object contemplated by stating the effect of that beauty and dignity upon the lover in contemplation. We shall see that this attitude differs still more from that of Donne and Lord Herbert of Cherbury than it does from that of the Provençaux.

The difference is not one which can be illustrated by the material biographies of the poets in question. It may even be said that Donne is almost as much a poet of successful matrimony as Coventry Patmore, whereas the life of Dante was in this respect anything but successful or regular.[26] Nevertheless, the inner life of Dante was not only more extensive, but had heights of feeling unknown to the later poet.

Let us examine "The Extasie" of Donne and the "Ode" of Lord Herbert.

Where, like a pillow on a bed,
  A pregnant bank swel'd up, to rest
The violets reclining head,
  Sat we two, one anothers best.[27]

Thus one of the finest poems of Donne, which is absolutely a very beautiful poem indeed, begins with one of the most hideous mixed figures of

speech in the language. To compare a bank to a pillow (it is surely superfluous to add "on a bed" since a pillow may be presumed to have much the same shape wherever it be disposed) does neither dignify nor elucidate; but the simile comes into sharp collision with a metaphor – the bank is pregnant. Having already learned that the bank was shaped like a pillow, we do not require to be told that it was pregnant, unless an earthquake was preparing, which was not the case. I pass over the question of the beauty of obstetrical metaphors in general: they were in the taste of the epoch, which is not ours. The pregnant bank swells, which is just what it should not do, for the whole scene that follows is represented as static; otherwise it would not be an "ecstasy" at all. We then learn why the bank swelled up; it did this in order to provide a pillow for the drooping head of the violet. But for this accommodating behaviour of the bank to be justified, the violet must be imagined as growing, not on the bank, but beside it; and if the bank swelled only sufficiently to support the head of the violet, it was hardly of great enough size to deserve the name of bank. Finally, it is a violation of the order of nature to ask us to conceive of the violet as antecedent to the bank – unless we affirm that the final cause of banks is the support of violets' heads.[28]

Here are four lines wasted to let us know that the lovers sat on a bank.

Our hands were firmely cimented
With a fast balme, which thence did spring,
Our eye-beames twisted, and did thred
Our eyes, upon one double string.

In this quatrain you observe that over-emphasis, that strain to impress more than to state, which is the curse of seventeenth-century verse not in England alone, but throughout Europe. The first two lines are permissible, because it is possible to conceive of lovers as having a sensation as if their hands were materially attached – it may be said, that is, to be the statement of a feeling. But as for the threading of the eyes like buttons on a double thread, one thread proceeding from each eye to the other, it not only fails to render the sense of losing oneself in an ecstasy of gazing into the eyes of a loved person, it actually aggravates the difficulty of finding out what it is all about.

So to'entergraft our hands, as yet
Was all the meanes to make us one,

And pictures in our eyes to get
  Was all our propagation.

The blemish of this quatrain is first, that the figure of the hands as cemented is not left to itself, but is rubbed over by the more complicated image of grafting. Second, the "begetting" of "pictures" is a figure which violates nature. And third, the poet cannot keep his mind on the ecstasy, but must needs be comparing the state already with physical union in the ordinary sense.

As 'twixt two equall Armies, Fate
  Suspends uncertaine victorie,
Our soules, (which to advance their state,
Were gone out,) hung 'twixt her and mee.

The meaning of this attractive figure, beyond the impression of trepidation and suspense which it certainly conveys, is not clear. I do not suppose the poet to imply a preparation for battle between the male and the female, or even battle between soul and body, yet one interpretation or the other seems inevitable. The former seems affirmed by the next quatrain.

And whil'st our soules negotiate there,
  Wee like sepulchrall statues lay;
All day, the same our postures were,
  And wee said nothing, all the day.

This stanza has always seemed to me particularly felicitous. Nothing could be more happy than the use of the word "negotiate," or the image of the effigies on a tomb, "sepulchrall statues"; while the "All day" beginning the third line, echoed by "all the day" at the end of the fourth, is a real *trouvaille* or euphony which goes to make one of the most perfect quatrains in this form that I have ever met.[29] And the almost affected simplicity of "And wee said nothing" – so characteristic of Donne, is perfection. The next several quatrains exhibit that playing upon an idea, arresting it and turning it about for examination, to which I called your attention in the preceding lecture as highly peculiar to Donne and his school. They lead up, however, to the introduction of a new and important idea.

When love, with one another so
  Interinanimates two soules,
That abler soule, which thence doth flow,
  Defects of lonelinesse controules.

Donne is often very well advised in his introductions of weighty Latin words, more or less philosophic, between several simple Saxon words. The idea of this quatrain is perhaps the cornerstone of the whole structure – an idea perhaps suggested to him by the *Banquet* of Plato – the isolation of soul from soul, its craving for the rare moments of semblance of fusion with another.[30] And this is something for which there seems no place in the amatory [verse] of the early Italian poetry. Indeed, I doubt whether, from a strictly orthodox Christian point of view – though I am not qualified to express an opinion – any more than from the point of view of a mystes of Eleusis – this union of human soul with human soul is intelligible.[31] But has it not been the theme of much of the literature of love of the last 300 years?

This idea, strange itself and possibly heretical from the point of view of the thirteenth century, is the natural prelude to the theme of the remainder of the poem.

> But O alas, so long, so farre
> Our bodies, why doe wee forbeare?
> They are ours, though they are not wee, Wee are
> The intelligences, they the spheare.

A stanza which illustrates very well that difficult habit of elision which, as Mr. Saintsbury remarks in one of his prefaces, becomes so intolerable in the poetry of this period. I do not see why Mr. Grierson elides here (T'affections) when he has not done so above.[32]

> So must pure lovers soules descend
> T'affections, and to faculties,
> Which sense may reach and apprehend,
> Else a great Prince in prison lies.
> To'our bodies turne wee then, that so
> Weake men on love reveal'd may looke;
> Loves mysteries in soules doe grow,
> But yet the body is his booke.
> And if some lover, such as wee,
> Have heard this dialogue of one,
> Let him still marke us, he shall see
> Small change, when we'are to bodies gone.

Here is posited, as clearly as may be, a distinction, a disjunction, between soul and body of which I think you will find no expression whatever in the

trecento, and for which I do not think you will find much authority in Aquinas. Let us note first what Aquinas would say to the suggestion that two souls of separate bodies could form one. Combating a suggestion of St. Augustine by a reference to the *De Anima*, he concludes:

> Cum impossibile sit plurium numero differentium esse unam formam, sicut impossibile est quod eorum sit unum *esse*; oportet principium intellectivum multiplicari secundum multiplicationem corporum. (Truc, 143-44)[33]

Concerning the difference between the body and the soul, he says:

> anima distat a corpore plurimum, si utriusque conditiones seorsim considerentur; unde si utrumque ipsorum separatim *esse* haberet, oporteret quod multa media intervenirent. Sed in quantum anima est forma corporis, non habet *esse* seorsim ab *esse* corporis, sed per suum *esse* corpori unitur immediate. Sic enim et quaelibet forma, si consideretur ut actus; habet magnam distantiam a materia, quae est ens in potentia tantum.[34]

The effort of Aquinas is obviously to reconcile the theological necessities of the soul with the Aristotelian view; but even were there no effort of reconciliation to be made, he would in no case accept anything like the virtual duplication of the human animal effected in the poem of Donne, into two beings, one called the soul and the other called the body, whose only essential difference is that one is admirable and the other slightly shameful. However, we are only concerned with what Aquinas thinks because of what the *trecentisti* write. And I repeat that you will find no hint of such dichotomy there. The only difference there is between higher and lower, more and less worthy loves; in the distinguishing and experiencing of which differences it must be said that Dante and his friends were consummately expert. There is no imagined struggle of soul and body, only the one struggle toward perfection.[35]

The separation of soul and body in this way is a modern conception; the only ancient parallel that occurs to me is the attitude of Plotinus toward the body as quoted by Porphyry;[36] and in the form employed by Donne represents a far cruder state of philosophical speculation than that of Aquinas. The apparent "glorification of the body" appreciated by many admirers of Donne is really a puritanical attitude. And the conception of the ecstasy of union between two souls is not only philosophically crude but emotionally limiting. The expression of love as contemplation of the

beloved object is not only more Aristotelian, it is also more Platonic, for it is the contemplation of absolute beauty and goodness partially revealed through a limited though delightful human object. What is there for Donne? This union in ecstasy is complete, is final; and two human beings, needing nothing beyond each other, rest on their emotion of enjoyment. But emotion cannot rest; desire must expand, or it will shrink. Donne, the modern man, is imprisoned in the embrace of his own feelings. There is little suggestion of adoration, of worship. And an attitude like that of Donne leads naturally to one of two things: to the Tennysonian happy marriage – not very different from Donne's own – which is one sort of bankruptcy;[37] or to the collapse of the hero of Huysmans' *En Route*: "Mon Dieu, que c'est donc bête!"[38] It leads in fact to most of modern literature; for whether you seek the Absolute in marriage, adultery or debauchery, it is all one – you are seeking in the wrong place.[39†]

This vain effort to find the permanent by fixing the transient is repeated magnificently in the "Ode" of Herbert of Cherbury. Sometimes this ode has seemed to me finer than Donne's "Extasie"; but that has been when it has taken me by surprise; on sober reflection I find more meat, more solidity, as well as greater technical beauty and more unpardonable defects, in the poem of Donne. It is the same cry:

O you, wherein, they say, Souls rest,
  Till they descend pure heavenly fires,
  Shall lustful and corrupt desires
With your immortal seed be blest?

And shall our Love, so far beyond
  That low and dying appetite,
  And which so chaste desires unite,
Not hold in an eternal bond?

And if every imperfect mind
  Make love the end of knowledge here,
  How perfect will our love be, where
All imperfection is refin'd?[40]

And against this I will set a passage from the *Vita Nuova*.

> There came a day when certain ladies . . . were met together for the pleasure of gentle company . . . One of them, who before had been talking

> with another, addressed me by my name, saying, "To what end lovest thou this lady, seeing that thou canst not support her presence? Now tell us this thing, that we may know it: for certainly the end of such a love must be worthy of knowledge." Whereupon, I said thus unto them: "Ladies, the end and aim of my Love was but the salutation of that lady of whom I conceive that ye are speaking: wherein alone I found that beatitude which is the goal of desire. And now that it hath pleased her to deny me this, Love, my Master, of his great goodness, hath placed all my beatitude there where my hope will not fail me." Then those ladies began to talk closely together; and as I have seen snow fall among the rain, so was their talk mingled with sighs. But after a little, that lady who had been the first to address me, addressed me again in these words: "We pray thee that thou wilt tell us wherein abideth this thy beatitude." And answering, I said but thus much: "In those words that do praise my lady."[41]

The experience which forms the material of the *Vita Nuova* is the material of adolescence; but it is handled by a mature man with a philosophy which assigned a place to such experience. Later, we shall have occasion to examine another poetry of adolescence, also, in our sense metaphysical – that of Jules Laforgue. But the philosophy of Laforgue, such as it was, was not one which could organise such experience, which remains, for him, the effusion of adolescent sentiment; and he remains, for us, imprisoned within his adolescence, with a philosophy which should have been mature. Neither did Donne have a philosophy to deal with such experience; but he passed through it, if he had it, to an early middle age. So Laforgue died appropriately at twenty-seven; so Donne is perpetually, in his erotic life, forty or thereabouts; but Dante is ageless. For Laforgue to have passed into a larger life would have necessitated a violent struggle, too violent for so delicate a constitution. Donne, I think, did not really pass; I mean that his religious writings, his sermons and his devotional verse, always give me the impression of an incomplete concentration, of a direction of forces more by a strong will than by surrender and assent. While with Dante there is no interruption between the first line of the *Vita Nuova* and the last line of the *Paradiso*. There was no compulsion, and no waste.

I propose in my next lecture to deal with the peculiarities of language of Donne and his school, with the conceit, with the quality of wit, and the relation of their modes of expression to their intellectual background.

NOTES

1. TSE had mistitled *Ara Vus* [*Vos*] *Prec* (1919) from the Provençal of Arnaut Daniel of *Purgatorio* XXVI; he later wrote in "Dante" (1929): "As for the Provençal poets, I have not the knowledge to read them at first hand" (*SE* 275).

2. Remy de Gourmont, *Dante, Béatrice et la poésie amoureuse. Essai sur l'idéal féminin en Italie à la fin du XIII siècle* [Dante, Beatrice, and Love Poetry: An Essay on the Feminine Ideal at the End of the Thirteenth Century] (Paris: Mercure de France, 1908).

3. *Trans*: In order to love, one had to be married and love outside of marriage. No more than between husband and wife, love between free young people was not permitted. In order to have the right to receive homage from knights, the young woman had to get married. What the Provençal poets constantly help us to catch a glimpse of is a noble lady, beautiful, powerful surrounded by a court of young knights, among whom she was permitted, if not duly commanded, to select one and to attach herself to him. The link established, they owed each other love under pain of forfeiture [of lover's rights]; nothing could separate them except, temporarily, death. It was fidelity within adultery. (29)

The Provençal lady is in no way "angelic." One does not fear her, one desires her. (30)

The new Florentine school would profoundly modify this conception of love, and consequently, the mores. The poets' love becomes pure, almost impersonal; its object is no longer a woman but beauty, femininity personified in an ideal creature. No idea of marriage or of possession haunts them . . . Love has all the characteristics of a cult, of which the sonnet and canzone are the hymns. (31)

It is a time in the history of the evolution of human feelings; it is a step towards the truth and an immense social progress. (32)

4. In "Dante" (1920), TSE had charged Walter Savage Landor with having misunderstood Dante's encounter with the adulterous lovers Paolo and Francesca in *Inferno* V (73-142) by "failing to perceive its relations" to the rest of the poem (229); he later challenged other misreadings in "Mr. Middleton Murry's Synthesis" (1927) and in "Two Studies in Dante" (1928).

5. An allusion to the painting *Il viaggio dei Magi* [The Journey of the Magi] (1459-61) by Benozzo Gozzoli (1420-97), in the Medici-Riccardi chapel in Florence. The fresco portrays a cavalcade of pilgrims on a winding, mountainous road to Bethlehem, set against a legendary background of fantastic landscapes and strange animals. TSE may have seen the work during his Italian tour of 1911, but he had earlier registered his impression of Gozzoli in his fine arts course on "Renaissance Painters," where he wrote in his report on "Fra Angelico in San Marco" that the *Adoration of the Magi* was "a fairly good composition, although perhaps too suggestive of a pageant, such as Benozzo Gozzoli might have done" (King's).

6. The *Shepherd of Hermas*, a second-century apocalyptic work written in Greek by Hermas, a manumitted Christian slave, describes visions and revelations granted to him by an angel in shepherd's dress.

7. TSE alludes to Pater's Platonic or homoerotic view of sexual love in *Plato and Platonism* (1893), a view that was sufficiently implicit in the "Conclusion" to *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873) to lead to the chapter's exclusion from the second edition (1877), and to Gourmont's biologically based view in *Physique de l'amour. Essai sur l'instinct sexuel* [The Natural Philosophy of Love: An Essay on the Sexual Instinct] (1903), which Pound translated

in 1922. The work attempts to strip the moral and sentimental trappings from the instinctive reproductive mechanism of love.

8. TSE later elaborated this position in "Dante" (1929): "the type of sexual experience which Dante describes as occurring to him at the age of nine years is by no means impossible or unique. My only doubt . . . is whether it could have taken place so *late* in life as the age of nine years" (*SE* 273). He wrote to John Hayward on 27 Dec 1939 (King's): "I had my first love affair at (as nearly as I can compute from confirmatory evidence) the age of five, with a young lady of three, at a seaside hotel. Her name was Dorothy: that is all I know. My feeling towards her was expressed entirely by bullying, teasing, and making her fetch and carry: yet I remember clearly that I pined for a bit after we were separated in the autumn. That was my preparation for reading (some years later) the *Vita Nuova*."

9. In 1072b of the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle discusses the final cause and end of movement in the universe: "The final cause, then, produces motion by being loved, and by that which it moves, it moves all other things." Trans. W. D. Ross, *Works of Aristotle*, vol VIII, ed. W. D. Ross and J. A. Smith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908). TSE later wrote in *Burnt Norton*: "Love is itself unmoving, / Only the cause and end of movement, / Timeless, and undesiring" (*CPP* 122).

10†. TSE had originally written: "the God, in short, of Mr. D. H. Lawrence." An allusion to Eckhart's doctrine of the Unknowable, the "wüste der Gottheit" [wilderness or desert Godhead], which TSE's teacher Josiah Royce characterized in his essay on Eckhart in *Studies of Good and Evil: A Series of Essays upon Problems of Philosophy and Life* (New York: D. Appleton, 1898): "Well, this mysticism consists in saying that all the knowledge of even a divine Self is rooted in the impenetrable mystery of existence, the nature, the inmost essence, of its own Selfhood. Whoever still obstinately and with divine love of the highest seeks to know this, must first lay aside the very conditions of knowledge, and pass into the still wilderness, where there is no longer either subject or object. But to do this is to reach the light above the light – is to touch the Absolute, and so to be in unity, and at peace, in the wilderness where no one is at home but the Godhead, and where even that is nothing determinate, and is yet the fountain of all things and determinations" (283).

Eckhart's chief followers were Johannes Tauler and Heinrich Suso, Dominican preachers who established a popular mystical movement to spread Eckhart's teachings.

11. The typist left a blank space for the canto number to be inserted; TSE later entered "XII" in black ink, subsequently corrected in pencil.

12. Richard of St. Victor (d. 1173), a philosopher and teacher born in Scotland, entered the Paris Abbey of St. Victor in the early 1150s and became prior in 1162. He was preceded at the Abbey by Hugh of St. Victor (ca. 1096-1141), who was born in the Saxon diocese of Halberstadt in central Germany. A scriptural scholar, Augustinian philosopher and Master of the Abbey, Hugh established in his writings the Victorine contemplative tradition of which Richard was heir and chief exponent in the second half of the twelfth century. Richard, read and admired by Aquinas, Bonaventure, and Dante, appears in the *Paradiso* X (130-32) with Isidore of Seville and the Venerable Bede: "Vedi oltre flammeggiar l'ardente spiro / d'Isidoro, di Beda e di Riccardo / che a considerar fu più che viro" ["See flaming next the glowing breath of Isidore, of Bede, and of Richard, who, in contemplating, was more than man"] (*DC3* 124-25).

13. The French cleric and editor Jacques Paul Migne (1800-75) included Richard's writings in his monumental *Patrologiae cursus completus*, 221 volumes (Paris, 1844-64). The text of Richard's work occupies 1379 of 1654 columns in volume 196 (1855). TSE had written to Richard Aldington on 11 Dec 1925: "By the way, should a Migne not be beyond our joint purses, I would be glad to split one with you, if we can agree as to who should possess which volumes, lending the others reciprocally. What I want chiefly is XII and XIII century philosophy, and Erigena; Prudentius and Tertullian and the fathers I should be content to borrow!" (*L2* 793). There are no volumes of Migne's edition in TSE's library.

14. TSE later crossed out "Major" and inserted "Minor" in his own hand, with a second-thought notation in the bottom margin: "But the B. Major also." He was right in the first instance: *De gratia contemplationis* [On the Grace of Contemplation] was known by ancient scholars as the *Benjamin Major*, as Migne indicates, and in modern times as *The Mystical Ark*. TSE confuses this work with Richard's *De praeparatione animi ad contemplationem* [Of the Preparation of the Soul for Contemplation], called the *Benjamin Minor*, more recently *The Twelve Patriarchs*; both were composed ca. 1153-1162.

15†. TSE later crossed out the following: "Perhaps I should apologise first for my somewhat Italianated pronunciation of Latin."

16. *Trans*: "By means of inconstant and slow feet, thinking wanders here and there in all directions without any regard for arriving. Meditation presses forward with great activity of soul, often through arduous and tough places, to the end of the way it is going. Contemplation, in free flight, circles around with marvelous quickness wherever impulse moves it. Thinking crawls; meditation marches and often runs; contemplation flies around everywhere and when it wishes suspends itself in the heights. Thinking is without labor and fruit; in meditation there is labor with fruit; contemplation continues without labor but with fruit. In thinking there is wandering; in meditation, investigation; in contemplation, wonder. Thinking is from imagination; meditation, from reason; contemplation, from understanding. Behold, these three: imagination, reason, understanding. Understanding occupies the highest place; imagination, the lowest; reason, the middle. Everything that is subject to the lower sense is also necessarily subject to the higher sense. Thus, it is evident that all things that are grasped by the imagination, as well as many other things that are above it, are grasped by reason. Similarly, those things which imagination and reason grasp, as well as things which they are not able to grasp, are perceived by the understanding. Thus, see how widely a ray of contemplation that illuminates evening expands itself." Trans. Grover A. Zinn, *The Twelve Patriarchs; The Mystical Ark; Book Three of the Trinity* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 155-56. TSE quotes (his emphasis) from Migne's edition (vol 196) of *De gratia contemplationis*, Book I, Chapter III, columns 66-67.

17. TSE excerpts and translates from Étienne Gilson's *Saint Thomas d'Aquin* in the series of texts and commentaries titled *Les Moralistes chrétiens* [*The Christian Moralists*] (Paris: V. Lecoffre, 1925): "Il résulte donc évidemment de là que c'est par la vision divine seule que des êtres intelligents peuvent trouver la vraie félicité . . ." (63).

18†. TSE later crossed out the following paragraph: "Incidentally, I think that if Mr. Middleton Murry would study carefully the works of St. John of the Cross, he would see that the parallel he draws between St. John and myself is quite illusory; for what St. John means by the 'dark night' and what Mr. Murry means by my 'dark night' are entirely different things."

Murry compared the nihilistic voice of *The Waste Land* to the voice of St. John of the Cross: "Once its armour of incomprehensibility is penetrated the poem is found to be a cry of grinding and empty desolation. Nothing could conceivably be more remote from the complacent scepticism of the cynical Augustans. This is a voice from the Dark Night of the Soul of a St. John of the Cross – the barren and dry land where no water is." "The 'Classical' Revival," *Adelphi*, 3 (Feb 1926), 592.

19. Santayana frequently associated types of mysticism with Epicurean detachment; TSE may recall it from his Harvard class with Santayana, or he may allude to a passage in *The Sense of Beauty: Being the Outlines of Aesthetic Theory* (New York: Scribner's, 1896): "The simultaneous view of many innumerable attractions felt together, produce equilibrium and indifference, as effectually as the exclusion of all. If we may call the liberation of the self by the consciousness of evil in the world, the Stoic sublime, we may assert that there is also an Epicurean sublime, which consists in liberation by equipoise. Any wide survey is sublime in that fashion" (241).

20. *Trans*: "All the sweetness and all the pleasures which all the things of this world furnish to the will are, in comparison with the sweetness and pleasure which is God, supreme pain, torment, and bitterness. He, therefore, who shall set his heart upon them is, in the eyes of God, worthy of pain, torment, and bitterness, and can never attain to those delights with which the divine union abounds." TSE quotes from Gonzague Truc's *Les Mystiques espagnols: Sainte Térèse – Saint Jean de la Croix* (145). The quotation is from *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, Book I, chapter IV, section 8. Trans. David Lewis (London: Thomas Baker, 1906), 20-21.

21. Müller, *Les Origines de la Compagnie de Jésus*, 101.

22. Passage editorially supplied. TSE read from a separate unidentified text, which was not subsequently incorporated into the fair copy of the lecture, except to indicate that the passage appeared on page 96. He evidently read from the "Second Exercise on Death" in *Manresa; or, The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius, for General Use* (London: Burns and Oates, 1881), 96, as quoted above, an interpretation of Ignatius not included in standard texts of the *Spiritual Exercises*.

He later wrote in the bottom margin: "Father Yealey S. J. has notified me that the passage I quoted is probably not by Ignatius, but added much later. I had used it because of the remarkable similarity of imagery to that of Donne." Francis Joseph Yealey (1888-1977), an American Jesuit from the St. Stanislaw Seminary in Florissant, Missouri, was pursuing a doctoral degree at Christ's College, Cambridge, and attended the Clark Lectures. Yealey wrote to TSE on 13 Mar 1926 to point out that his quotation of "a certain meditation on death" does not occur in the authentic Latin version of the *Spiritual Exercises*, explaining that it must have been added by a spiritual director who published his development of the text without explaining its relation to St. Ignatius: "I think you will find St. Ignatius' own thought as austere and straightforward in its way as that of Richard of St. Victor. May I add that I did not think your comparison especially happy? Richard's treatise on contemplation is analytical and discursive. *The Exercises*, besides dealing primarily with the different though related business of asceticism, are not a treatise at all but a series of fairly obvious working-principles whose virtue is supposed to lie partly in their arrangement and partly in being assimilated in the most intimate and practical manner possible by personal effort." Yealey supplied TSE with a copy of *The Spiritual Exercises*, 4th edition revised, trans. John Morris et al. (London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1923).

23. In "The Possibility of a Poetic Drama" (1920) TSE had observed: "Certain works of philosophy can be called works of art," including "much of Aristotle" and "Mr. Bradley's

Principles of Logic" (281). Jonathan Swift's *The Drapier's Letters*, a protest against the circulation of debased coinage in Ireland, appeared in 1724.

24. In *Epistola* X (numbered XIII in some editions) (1314-17 or 1319-20), addressed to his patron and the Ghibelline lord of Verona, Cangrande della Scala (1291-1329), Dante explains that when he is met with carping incredulity about the reality of visions that cannot be related, he appeals first to scriptural authority: "And if all this suffices not the carpers, let them read Richard of St. Victor in his book *De Contemplatione* . . . and they will cease to carp." *The Latin Works of Dante*, trans. Philip H. Wicksteed (London: J. M. Dent, 1924), 360.

25. *Trans*: "Who is she coming, whom all gaze upon, / Who makes the air all tremulous with light [?]" Trans. Rossetti, "A Rapture concerning his Lady," *The Early Italian Poets*, 255. TSE quotes from Cavalcanti's "Sonetto VII," giving variants of the second line but slightly misquoting in parentheses the alternative that Pound preferred, "Che fa di clarità l'aer tremare!" See *The Sonnets and Ballate of Guido Cavalcanti*, trans. Ezra Pound (Boston: Small, Maynard, 1912), 14.

26. Donne married seventeen-year-old Anne More in Dec 1601, in violation of Common and Canon Law; he pleaded with her choleric father Sir George More in prison and in court for months until the marriage was confirmed in Apr 1602, an event that he likely celebrated in "The Canonization." Before she died in childbirth, having borne him twelve children, Donne may have attested to the richness of their marriage in "Love's Growth." Coventry Patmore married Emily Augusta Andrews in 1847, and between 1854 and 1862 he published the four parts of his long narrative poem, *The Angel in the House*, which celebrated the selfless ideals of married love.

Dante married Gemma Donati sometime between 1291, the year after the death of Beatrice, and 1298. She bore him four children. Boccaccio's speculative but widely accepted characterization of their allegedly unhappy married life in his *Vita di Dante* was based on evidence that the marriage had been arranged by Dante's relations to console him for the loss of Beatrice, that Gemma was a suspicious wife who attempted to domesticate Dante's imagination, that Dante never directly addressed her in his works, and that she never joined him again after his twenty-year exile from Florence.

27. *MLP* 16, ll. 1-4; followed in discussion by lines 5-20, 41-44, 49-52, 65-76.

28. In his letter to TSE of 31 Jan 1927, Praz remarked of this discussion: "Of course the image of the bed and the pillow is preposterous, and the languor of the violet seems conventional, but Freud, perhaps, might find the poet's mood on that occasion mirrored even in an apparently superfluous detail like that one: it is a nuptial simile in a nuptial poem, and in so far it has its *raison d'être*."

29. TSE echoes Donne's phrase, "all the day," in the third quatrain of "Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar" (1919): "The horses, under the axletree / Beat up the dawn from Istria / With even feet. Her shuttered barge / Burned on the water all the day" (*CPP* 24).

30. In Plato's *Symposium* (or *Banquet*), Aristophanes recounts how Zeus divided the dual natures of what were originally three separate sexes: all man, all woman, and androgynous; he offers this primordial wound as a mythical explanation of all lovers' desire to unite with the beloved and heal their divided natures.

31. A "mystes" was a first-level initiate in the Eleusinian Mysteries, a set of ceremonies based in the ancient Greek city of Eleusis and dedicated to the cult of Demeter and Persephone; according to James Frazer and others whom TSE studied, the mysteries involved the reenactment

of a sacred marriage union between the corn goddess and the earth god, meant to ensure agricultural fertility by way of homeopathic or imitative magic.

32. TSE replaced Grierson's "T'affections" (line 66) with "To affection" in his typed text. Saintsbury, in his "General Introduction" to the first volume of the *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period* (1905), deplores the "slipshod" contractions that made their way into seventeenth-century poetry, exclaiming that the "worst instances possess an offensiveness which is independent and intrinsic, and which is perhaps the greatest drawback to the enjoyment of this poetry . . . It was to get back the ten syllables into the heroic line, the eight into the 'short' line (as Butler calls it) and no more, that these abominable Procrustean tortures were committed" (x).

33. *Trans*: "Since it is impossible that several numerically different things should have one form, just as it is impossible for them to have one act of being, it is necessary for the intellective principle to be multiplied according to the multiplication of bodies." This passage is actually an anonymous summary, composed in the style of Aquinas, of *Summa theologiae* Ia, q. 76, a.2, printed in parenthesis and under the heading "Conclusio" in numerous editions of *Summa*, including the one from which TSE quotes, Gonzague Truc's *La Pensée de Saint Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris: Payot, 1924), 143-44. Truc takes both texts directly from F. Lachat's edition *Somme théologique*, vol III (Paris: L. Vivès, 1880), 150. In the *Summa theologiae* Ia, q. 76, a.2, ob.6, Aquinas cites St. Augustine in *De quantitate animae* [The Measure of the Soul] and in opposition refers to a passage from Aristotle's *Physics* II.3 (195b25-8) rather than from the *De anima*.

34. *Summa theologiae* Ia, q. 76, a.7, ad ob. 3. *Trans*: "The soul is indeed very distant from the body, if we consider the condition of each separately: so that if each had a separate existence, many means of connection would have to intervene. But inasmuch as the soul is the form of the body, it has not an existence apart from the existence of the body, but by its own existence is united to the body immediately. This is the case with every form which, if considered as an act, is very distant from matter, which is a being only in potentiality." *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, vol 4 (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1922), 50. TSE quotes from Truc, 185-86, as taken from Lachat, 175.

35. Praz cautioned TSE about this passage in his letter of 31 Jan 1927: "A little inaccuracy of interpretation, which remains unnoticed when slurred over in the course of a lecture, may wreck the whole work, when insisted upon and magnified in a book. I am not sure, for instance, about what you are saying in your III lect . . . on the trecentisti having no idea of a dichotomy between soul and body. I have not gone very far into the question myself: but, before coming to any conclusion concerning Dante, for inst., I would examine carefully all the passages of his works bearing on the subject – a task rendered very easy to us by the admirable index *raisonné* appended to the *Testo critico* of Dante's Works, Bemporad 1921. I daresay you are familiar with it."

36. Porphyry of Tyre (233-304 AD), friend, follower, and editor of Plotinus, begins his *Life of Plotinus*: "Plotinus, the philosopher our contemporary, seemed ashamed of being in the body." Trans. Stephen Mackenna, *Plotinus: The Ethical Treatises* (London: Philip Lee Warner, 1917), 1. In his annotated copy (King's) of *Plotini Enneads*, ed. Richard Volkmann, in two volumes (Leipzig, 1883), TSE notes of the fourth *Ennead*: "He looks at soul 1st as possessed of faculties wh. refer to sensible world (Aristotle) as rising above the world to union with God . . . Plotinus is a two substance man as against reduction of the soul to functions of the body."

37. TSE alludes to the marriage song that serves as the epilogue to Tennyson's *In Memoriam* (1850). Written for the poet's sister, Cecilia, and Edmund Lushington, who were married in 1842, the epithalamium celebrates the "happy hour, and happier hours" that await them, with the implication that marriage takes the couple closer to a paradisal state.

38. *Trans*: "My God, how stupid the business is!" Trans. Alfred Allinson, *Down There* (London: Fortune Press, 1930), 33. Durtal, the protagonist of four novels by Joris-Karl Huysmans, mutters this exclamation to himself not in *En route* (1895) but in *Là-Bas* (1891), Chapter XIII, when Madame Chantelouve comes to him for an adulterous rendezvous.

39†. TSE later crossed out the following: "*Donna è laggiù*" [Lady is down there]. The phrase reverses a characteristic vision of the *trecentisti* – *Donna è lassù* [Lady is up there] – to suggest its deflation by modern writers, as Huysmans had done in *Là-Bas* [Down There].

40. *MLP* 30-31, ll. 65-72, 117-20.

41. *La vita nuova* XVIII, as translated by Rossetti in *The Early Italian Poets*, 194-95; TSE's ellipsis.

Lecture IV

The Conceit in Donne

In the preceding lecture I endeavoured to persuade you that the systematic Latin philosophy of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, combining with the Provençal influence, produced in the *trecento* that conception of love which is expressed in the *Vita Nuova*. And I tried to present the *Vita Nuova* itself under the aspect, so to speak, of a scientific monograph, the record of experiments upon sentiment; the record of the method of utilising, transforming instead of discarding, the emotions of adolescence; the record of a discovery analogous to those concerning the use of the waste products of coal-tar in industry.[1] The result of this discovery was a real extension of the area of emotion, and an attitude both more "spiritual" and more "worldly" than that of Donne or that of Tennyson or that of Laforgue. And I wished to indicate that the chaotic intellectual background of Donne issues in a compromise with the flesh, rather than an acceptance of the flesh, and in exactly a contraction of the field of experience. I pointed out the different types of mysticism operant on the minds of the two men; there is no reason that I can see for calling either of the two men a "mystic," or for talking about the "mysticism" of either Donne or Dante, unless a capacity for feeling beyond the ordinary boundaries of experience is always mysticism; but you can use the term if you like.

I want now to show, if I can, how the acceptance of one orderly system of thought and feeling results, in Dante and his friends, in a simple, direct and even austere manner of speech, while the maintenance in suspension of a number of philosophies, attitudes and partial theories which are enjoyed rather than believed, results, in Donne and in some of our contemporaries, in an affected, tortuous, and often over elaborate and ingenious manner of speech.

If you examine the figures of speech employed by Dante, or by Cavalcanti, or the best of those of the other men, you will find, I think, that the difference between their images and those of Donne lies in the focus of interest. The interest of Dante lies in the idea or the feeling to be conveyed; the image always makes this idea or feeling more intelligible. In Donne, the interest is dispersed; it may be in the ingenuity of conveying the idea by

that particular image; or the image itself may be more difficult than the idea; or it may be in the compulsion, rather than in the discovery, of resemblances. Part of the pleasure may be in the natural incongruity which is actually overcome; part of the feeling is the "feel" of an idea, rather than the feeling of a person who lives by that idea. It is an harmony of dissonances. But before analysing the speech of Donne let me leave in your memory, for the sake of contrast, one image of Dante. He is attempting to express the sense of entering the first heaven, at the beginning of the *Paradiso*.

Pareva a me che nube ne coprisse
lucida, spessa, solida e polita,
quasi adamante che lo sol ferisse.

Per entro sè l'eterna margarita
ne recepette, com'acqua recepe
raggio di luce, permanendo unita.

"Meseemed a cloud enveloped us, shining, dense, firm and polished, like diamond smitten by the sun. Within itself the eternal pearl received us, as water doth receive a ray of light, though still itself uncleft."[2]

You observe the strict utility of these images. They are to convey a supersensuous experience; the adjectives are chosen as they might be in a scientific treatise, because they are the nearest possible to approximate what he is driving at. The image of the light passing through water is undecorated and is not, nor is intended to be, interesting apart from the experience which it makes more apprehensible. And this I think is characteristic of all of Dante's similes and metaphors: they have a rational necessity.

Now I must not draw my distinctions too tight. I am perfectly aware that between the image of absolute necessity, like that above, and the extreme conceit, there are infinite degrees; you could present many images, and specially from the Elizabethans, of which it is difficult to say whether they are serviceable or ornamental. Speaking of the Elizabethans, I think of a figure used in one of the Martin Marprelate tracts, which I can never forget; when the author, speaking of his adversary Bishop Cooper, says that he "Has a face like old wainscot, and would lie as fast as a dog would trot." As for the bishop's veracity, there is no doubt something to be said on both sides, but in my memory, that simile sticks to him like wax; he will never be free of it.[3] These are, properly, rhetorical images; they emphasise rather than elucidate; and in strict reason, it is meaningless to compare rapidity of

lying, even *kat' analogian*,[4] to rapidity of dog's trotting. And the image of old wainscot is a variable one: that is to say, it may have effect equally on various minds to which it suggests different things. To me it means an old, weatherbeaten, pitted as if worm-eaten, brown face; and in juxtaposition with the dogtrot, suggests great villainy. This variable margin of suggestion is what I call rhetorical effect. But it is quite different from the well-known figure of Dante when he is trying to make you visualise exactly that dolorous twilight in which moved the form of Brunetto Latini – the famous image of the old tailor threading a needle:

sì ver noi aguzzevan le ciglia,
come vecchio sartor fa nella cruna

"they knitted their brows at us, like an old tailor threading a needle."[5] This image, whether one has ever seen an old tailor threading a needle or not, is exact and the same for everybody; and it does make you see how the people looked, better than if it had not been used at all. On the other hand, I admit that sometimes the suggestiveness of an image of Dante will, for me at any rate, exceed the exact meaning:

Poi si rivolse, e parve di coloro
che corronno a Verona il drappo verde
per la campagna; e parve di costoro
quegli che vince e non colui che perde.

"Then he (Brunetto Latini) turned back, and seemed like one of those who run for the green cloth at Verona through the open field; and of them seemed he who gains, not he who loses."[6] Of course the sports at Verona may be assumed to be better known to Dante's original audience than they are to us. But I know not why, the notion of this sinning and defeated soul running off "like a victor" is very poignant to me. The figure itself is exact enough to help us to visualise the man running.

I know that it will occur to you to ask, as I criticise the conceit and the language of Donne, whether this is anything peculiar to the metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century – especially as it is part of my thesis that it is not particular to metaphysical poetry in general – or whether it is not merely the inheritance of the bombast of the Elizabethans. And if I were giving a longer course of lectures, or if in this course I were dealing only with the language of the metaphysical poets, it would be my duty to go into this question in some detail. All that I can say is this: you cannot establish

such a definition that no figure of speech chosen before a certain date will not be conceited, and so that every figure of speech in the poetry after that date will be conceited. But in general, the excesses of the Elizabethans are verbal and declamatory, for the sake of the sound, or else, without any *arrière pensée*,[7] for the pleasure of introducing some image of eye or ear which is beautiful or jolly in itself. And there are kinds of figures of speech, of which it would be tempting to multiply examples, which abound in Shakespeare and which would be impossible for Dante, which are of the highest rank. To take one which I have often quoted: from *Antony and Cleopatra* –

> She looks like sleep
> As she would catch another Antony
> In her strong toil of grace.[8]

You would not say that this had the same rational necessity as an image of Dante, but necessary it is, in some other way; and it is an image of which Dante never would have thought. It is an image absolutely woven into the fabric of the thought; and the whole of Cleopatra's disastrous power over men and empires and navies is evoked in it.

I have said that you cannot define the conceit so that it shall never occur before a certain date; on the other hand I would point out that some of Donne's best lines – and some of those by which he is best known – are not conceited at all, are not of an age or a fashion but eternal. If you have the Grierson anthology by you, turn to "The Funerall" on page 18 and to "The Relique" on page 21. They are as well known as anything he wrote, and they are variations on the same theme.

> Who ever comes to shroud me, do not harme
> Nor question much
> That subtile wreath of haire, which crowns my arme;
> The mystery, the signe you must not touch,
> For 'tis my outward Soule,
> Viceroy to that, which then to heaven being gone,
> Will leave this to controule,
> And keepe these limbes, her Provinces, from dissolution.[9]

This is typical of Donne's procedure. The first three lines are perfectly simple; the adjective "subtile" is exact, though its exactness be not to us immediately apparent in the literal sense of the word which has so suffered

from the abuse of the kindred word "subtle";[10] the only blemish is the very slightly distracting over-emphasis of the metaphorical verb "crown." But with line 5 he becomes wholly and characteristically conceited: you find yourself in a tangle of souls and deputy-souls, kings, viceroys and territories. And yet, though it is irrelevant, though it diminishes rather than develops the thought, though it represents an inward chaos and disjection, it is pleasing. In order to get the full flavour out of Donne, you must construe analytically and enjoy synthetically; you must hold the elements in suspension and contiguity in your mind, as he did himself. And you will observe that in his conceits he is equally serious as elsewhere. How the "wit" in these lines develops into "wit" as we know it, the development from juxtaposition to ironic contrast, is a problem we shall have to attack later; sufficient at the moment to remark that when we speak of the wit of Donne, the wit of Dryden, the wit of Swift, and our own wit, we are not speaking of the same thing, and we are not speaking of different things, but of a gradual development and different stages of the same thing.

We turn then to "The Relique."

When my grave is broke up againe
  Some second ghest to entertaine,
  (For graves have learn'd that woman-head
  To be to more then one a Bed)
    And he that digs it, spies
A bracelet of bright haire about the bone,
    Will he not let'us alone,
And thinke that there a loving couple lies,
Who thought that this device might be some way
To make their soules, at the last busie day,
Meet at this grave, and make a little stay?[11]

In this version we observe that the procedure is reversed. It begins with the conceit, and proceeds to the more simple and direct. In some ways this version has the better of it. To place the discovery of the token at the moment when the grave is broken open, instead of at the moment of shrouding the body of the late deceased, intensifies and makes more perdurable the passion, makes more vivid and significant the wreath about the arm, now bone. But the notion of the violation of the grave for "entertaining" a "second guest," and still more the analogy of the fickleness of graves with the fickleness of women, are of very doubtful value in this place. Still

more, the reference to female wantonness, of doubtful taste in itself, is particularly out of place in a poem intended to celebrate an instance of reciprocal fidelity –

> Will he not let'us alone,
> And thinke that there a loving couple lies . . .

But the famous line

> A bracelet of bright haire about the bone

is an example of those things said by Donne which could not have been put equally well otherwise, or differently by a poet of any other school.[12] The associations are perfect: those of "bracelet," the brightness of the hair, after years of dissolution, and the final emphasis of "bone," could not be improved upon. And the close of the stanza is impeccable. Yet even here,

> Who thought that this device might be some way
> To make their soules, at the last busie day,
> Meet at this grave, and make a little stay?

is there not a slight distraction, a slight diversion, an over-development, after the ultimacy of the great line, in the suggestion of a conscious purpose in the symbol, a motive beyond the pure instinctive clinging to any contact or memory of contact?

In the next verse, Donne is in full cry after the *concetti*:[13]

> If this fall in a time, or land,
> Where mis-devotion doth command,
> Then, he that digges us up, will bring
> Us, to the Bishop, and the King,
> To make us Reliques; then
> Thou shalt be a Mary Magdalen, and I
> A something else thereby;
> All women shall adore us, and some men;
> And since, at such time, miracles are sought,
> I would have that age by this paper taught
> What miracles wee harmelesse lovers wrought.[14]

Here, you see, Donne has lost his focus on the meaning of the notion of the bracelet on the bone; he is occupied with the possible consequences of the

notion. And I think that it is safe to say that Donne's method is frequently to proceed from the greater to the less, from the central to the peripheral, from the passionate to the reflective. And in this he is honest to his own mind, and sympathetic to ours. For passion, unless it be of an astounding simplicity and ingenuity, or unless it be sustained by a high philosophy which interprets it into something else, must always fade out. In Donne it fades into the play of suggested ideas; and Donne is the great ruler of that borderland of fading and change. It is only one more step in metaphysical poetry, to the conscious irony of conflict between feeling, and the intellectual interpretation which feeling wishes to give itself, and reason.

Signor Mario Praz, to whose book I have already referred, remarks shrewdly that "whilst in other singers the whole poem vibrates under the impulse of the first impetus, with Donne on the other hand the impulse is suddenly . . . broken by an anticlimax of ratiocination";[15] and I would suggest that one of the reasons why we find Donne so sympathetic is that we also, provided with no philosophy which can assign a serious and dignified place to the original impulse, take refuge in the anticlimax of ratiocination; only, with us, the contrast is more conscious and complete.

This ironical contrast is illustrated by another well known poem in the Grierson book, "The Blossome," with the last two stanzas:

> Well then, stay here; but know,
> When thou hast stayd and done thy most;
> A naked thinking heart, that makes no show,
> Is to a woman, but a kinde of Ghost;
> How shall shee know my heart; or having none,
> Know thee for one?
> Practise may make her know some other part,
> But take my word, shee doth not know a Heart.
>
> Meet mee at London, then,
> Twenty dayes hence, and thou shalt see
> Mee fresher, and more fat, by being with men,
> Then if I had staid still with her and thee.
> For Gods sake, if you can, be you so too:
> I would give you
> There, to another friend, whom wee shall finde
> As glad to have my body, as my minde.[16]

In these lines – and one would go to gaol for ten years if it would help write as good lines as these! – there is a good deal of what is called cynicism – and cynicism of a very modern type. Substitute the *jeune fille* for the mature woman of Donne, and it might be Laforgue speaking, or another.[17] "Mummy, Possessed."[18] But cynicism is always the indication of a mental chaos, or at least a mental disjunction and lack of unity. In these lines of Donne there is a great deal of the modern *recherche de l'absolu*,[19] the disappointed romanticism, the vexation of resignation at finding the world other than one wanted it to be. The literature of disillusionment is the literature of immaturity. It is in this way that I have ventured to affirm that Dante is more a man of the world than is Donne. He knew what he could get, and he took it, without criticising the condition of its teeth.

But, to turn from restriction to praise, how wonderful, how impeccable, the diction and versification of Donne! And what a profound change he operated! In this respect, he is the child of Ben Jonson, the parent of Dryden, the ancestor of Pope, Goldsmith and Samuel Johnson – as much or more, I think, than Waller, Denham or Oldham. The change of style from Provençal to early Italian is the change from the lyrical to the philosophical; the change from Elizabethan to Jacobean is the change from lyrical to rhetorical. I am using the term "rhetorical" as exactly as I can, and, be it well noted, without any implication whatever of eulogy or defamation. It is different in kind, neither better nor worse. Some years ago, I wrote a short note on "rhetoric" which was included in my volume *The Sacred Wood*, which in the main I still approve. But it was written in a different context than this, and I was thinking chiefly of so-called "dramatic" rhetoric. But I said even then, that I could not admit any antithesis between the "rhetorical" and the "conversational."[20] Rhetoric may be merely a development of conversation: Cicero talked his discourses; the actors of the Elizabethan dramatists shouted them. Any literary mode is a development out of speech; sometimes it gets too far away from speech: in philosophy, Professor Husserl or Professor Cohen is a good deal farther away from speech, it seems to me, than Berkeley or Leibniz or even Kant; Adam Smith is a good deal nearer to the conversational style than most of our modern economists.[21] I mean that the Elizabethan styles were closer to song – even in their dramatic verse – than the styles of the seventeenth century. It is a variation of focus: the focus is shifted, even if ever so little, from sound, to sense; from the sound of the word to the sound of the sense of the word, if you like; the sense of the sound or the sound of the sense; to

the consciousness of the meaning of the word and a pleasure in that sound having that meaning – no amount of subtlety can quite express the fine shades of transition. Analagous to the transition [is] the shift of focus from metaphysics to psychology; the word is not merely the noise, as in the lyric, not merely the meaning, as in philosophical poetry; the word is interesting for its own meaning, as well as for what the writer means to mean by it. In other words, the conceited style is really the origin of the style of those who, [such] as Dryden and Dr. Johnson, were its chief censurers. Rhetoric tends toward the law courts, lyricism toward the musical instrument, the verse of Dante and Cavalcanti toward the Sorbonne; they all have the same relation to "conversation."

On one side the conceit is merely the development in poetry of an expository device known to preachers from the earliest times, the extended, detailed, interminable simile. The Buddha used it in the Fire Sermon and elsewhere; even Richard of St. Victor uses something similar in his allegorical interpretations of the Scriptures; and Donne, in his own sermons, employed it in almost the same form as that used by Bishop Latimer. See, in the Oxford Selections from the Sermons, the figure of the Ship.[22] In his verse, one of the most successful extended conceits is in that beautiful poem "A Valediction."

As virtuous men passe mildly away,
  And whisper to their soules, to goe,
Whilst some of their sad friends doe say,
  The breath goes now, and some say, no:

So let us melt, and make no noise,
  No teare-floods, nor sigh-tempests move,
T'were prophanation of our joyes
  To tell the layetie our love.

Moving of th'earth brings harmes and feares,
  Men reckon what it did and meant,
But trepidation of the spheares,
  Though greater farre, is innocent.[23]

Here there is no flaw, no criticism can be cast upon the verse; no one has ever handled this quatrain form better than Donne. The astronomical comparison gives some trouble; when grasped, it appears to be what I call a rhetorical figure, for its effect is emphasis and over-statement; it is to say,

that so huge an event as this separation of lovers is like the immense but imperceptible movements of heavenly bodies.

Dull sublunary lovers love
(Whose soule is sense) cannot admit
Absence, because it doth remove
Those things which elemented it.

This verse illustrates again the exaggeration so characteristic of the seventeenth century and Marinism:[24] these lovers are (in modern language) "cosmic," all other are "sublunary."

But we by a love, so much refin'd,
That our selves know not what it is,
Inter-assured of the mind,
Care lesse, eyes, lips, and hands to misse.

Our two soules therefore, which are one,
Though I must goe, endure not yet
A breach, but an expansion,
Like gold to ayery thinnesse beate.

Note how close the conceit may come to the compliment. Donne is not expounding or implying any theory of the soul in which he could be said to believe; it is never quite certain that he believes anything. The figure does not make intelligible an idea, for there is properly no idea until you have the figure; the figure creates the idea – if gold can be beaten out thin, why should not a soul? He is not, and is never, stating a philosophical theory in which he believes. When Guido Cavalcanti says

Amor, che nasce di simil piacere,
Dentro del cor si posa,
Formando di disio nova persona,
Ma fa la sua virtù 'n vizio cadere

he is more serious, because he believes it.[25] He is maintaining substantially the same theory as that of *Purgatorio* XVIII: "Then, even as fire moves upward by reason of its form, whose nature it is to ascend, there where it endures longest in its material; so the enamoured mind falls to desire, which is a spiritual movement, and never rests until the object of its love makes it rejoice."[26]

If they be two, they are two so
As stiffe twin compasses are two,
Thy soul, the fixt foot, makes no show
To move, but doth, if th'other doe.

And though it in the center sit,
Yet when the other far doth rome,
It leanes, and hearkens after it,
And growes erect, as that comes home.

Such wilt thou be to mee, who must
Like th'other foot, obliquely runne;
Thy firmnes makes my circle just,
And makes me end, where I begunne.

This figure has been greatly admired, and it must freely be admitted to be highly successful, intelligible, apt and striking. But there is always that that makes us feel that Donne is hovering on the edge of *vers de société*[27] – that the idea has been developed to suit the image, that the image and not the idea is the important thing.

It may be thought that what I have said about Donne's use of conceits casts doubt upon his sincerity, and this I must hasten to deny. It implies only that Donne is not with the greatest, that he is not with Shakespeare, or Dante, or Guido, or Catullus. But of certain secondary modes he is an indisputable master; he is a mind of the *trecento* in disorder; capable of experiencing and setting down many super-sensuous feelings, only these feelings are of a mind in chaos, not of a mind in order. The immediate experience passes into thought; and this thought, far from attaining belief, is immediately the object of another feeling. If you like you may call the thought "insincere," because it does not reach belief; but his feeling of the thought is perfectly sincere. And this isolation of thought as an object of sense could hardly have been possible before the seventeenth century.

In my opinion, which may be heretical, he is most successful in some of his longer poems, and especially the two Anniversaries.[28] For where he has greater space, the rhetorical style shows to greater advantage.

Or as sometimes in a beheaded man,
Though at those two Red seas, which freely ranne,
One from the Trunke, another from the Head,
His soule be sail'd, to her eternall bed,

His eyes will twinckle, and his tongue will roll,
As though he beckned, and cal'd backe his soule,
He graspes his hands, and he pulls up his feet,
And seemes to reach, and to step forth to meet
His soule; when all these motions which we saw,
Are but as Ice, which crackles at a thaw,
Or as a Lute, which in moist weather, rings
Her knell alone, by cracking of her strings:[29]

Here, in the longer reach of thought, the curious image of the Red seas is properly submerged and gives no offence; and the couplet, crude enough from the standpoint of Dryden or Denham, but always, in Donne – as seldom in Hall or Marston – with a rugged melody of its own, suits, by its lack of form or limit, the errant and endless mental activity of the author.

What has been said of the conceit of Donne will apply, externally at least, to the conceit of several other minor poets – the Italianate Crashaw excepted – who must be dealt with separately. The resemblances to Donne are strongest in the smallest poets. None can compete with Donne in power of thought, in power of sensualising thought; and they are apt to be excellent, in so far as they are not metaphysical. Two of the very finest of those poems which are closely patterned upon Donne, are the "Ode" of Lord Herbert previously mentioned, and "The Definition of Love" of Marvell (Grierson, page 77).

My Love is of a birth as rare
As 'tis for object strange and high;
It was begotten by despair
Upon Impossibility.[30]

Of neither of these poems is it necessary to say anything more than is said of Donne; but the latter should be read to understand how much less need be said: compared to the twistings of the brain of Donne, this is mere parroting of anagrams. For Marvell, in spite of the fantastic Marlborough House poem,[31] was not at his best really metaphysical at all – I refer to the "Horation Ode," rightly excluded from the Grierson book. The first paragraph of "The Coy Mistress" is verbally conceited, but not metaphysical in spirit; for his brilliant *jeux d'esprit*[32] have a very different inspiration from the meditation of Donne. He is humourous and then serious, and in Donne the humour and the seriousness are fused; and when Marvell becomes

suddenly quite serious, he is, to my mind, much more Latin in spirit than any of his contemporaries.

> But at my back I always hear
> Time's winged chariot hurrying near,
> And yonder all before us lie
> Deserts of vast eternity.
> Thy beauty shall no more be found;
> Nor in thy marble vault shall sound
> My echoing song; then worms shall try
> That long-preserved virginity . . .[33]

Until we reach the worms which try "Thy long-preserved virginity" there is nothing conceited about this his most famous passage; and there is little strictly metaphysical in the whole poem.

On the other hand, there is one poem of Bishop King which seems to me quite metaphysical, although not wholly conceited. I call it an original contribution to metaphysical poetry because of fusion, not merely analogy, of the image of the journey – an image held up for inspection as Donne himself would hold it, until a new emotion appears also – with the progress of the soul in time toward eternity.

> But heark! My Pulse like a soft Drum
> Beats my approach, tells *Thee* I come;
> And slow howere my marches be,
> I shall at last sit down by *Thee*.[34]

In much lesser men we find the conceit employed and multiplied so rapidly that the inspiration of Donne becomes completely lost among these spawning metaphors. What are we to say to this, of John Cleveland:

> Since 'tis my doom, Love's undershrieve,
> Why this reprieve?
> Why doth my she-advowson fly
> Incumbency?
> Panting expectance makes us prove
> The antics of benighted love,
> And withered mates when wedlock joins,
> They're Hymens monkeys, which he ties by th' loins,
> To play, alas! but at rebated foins.[35]

A stanza which, I admit, I have never taken the trouble to understand. Or this, of Benlowes:

> Who steals from Time, Time steals from his the prey:
> Pastimes pass Time, pass Heav'n away:
> Few, like the blessed thief, do steal Salvation's Day.
>
> Fools rifle Time's rich lott'ry: who misspend
> Life's peerless gem, alive descend;
> And antedate with stings their never-ending end.[36]

Cleveland is not very remunerative; Benlowes' verses, like those of Miss Gertrude Stein, can, for anyone whose taste has already been disciplined elsewhere, provide an extremely valuable exercise for unused parts of the mind.[37] But they both bring us to the question: how far can our definition of "metaphysical verse" be stretched?

I attempted to show the sensuous interest of Donne in his own thoughts as objects, and I attempted to show that this interest naturally led him to expression by conceits. A conceit is the extreme limit of the simile and metaphor which is used for its own sake, and not to make clearer an idea or more definite an emotion. But the conceit was not the sole offspring of the peculiar intellect of Donne. It was already prepared by the Elizabethans, although, owing to the difference of mind, the bombast of the sixteenth century and the conceit of the seventeenth century are two different phenomena. The conceit also appears in Italy; and in its Italian origins, analogous with the origins of baroque art, we shall presently examine it in the poetry of Crashaw. Not until we have examined this can we arrive at any conclusions which will enable us to distinguish the conceited clearly from the metaphysical, and to conclude how far the whole generation may be called metaphysical and how far merely conceited – how far that is, the common ground is on tricks of language rather than habits of thought. For you will have seen that it works both ways: that the metaphysical mind in poetry, with the background of the seventeenth century which I so briefly outlined in the second lecture, tends toward the conceit; and on the other hand common tricks of language tend to induce common habits of thought and feeling, and any poet who is conceited is likely to be more or less metaphysical. The influence of Donne runs out in three channels: the courtly poets of *vers de société*, such as Carew and Suckling, and moving toward Rochester and then Prior;[38] the fantastical poets, like Cleveland and

Benlowes; and Cowley. We shall have to reascend these streams, and again collate Donne, Marvell and King.[39] But meanwhile we must investigate a wholly different inspiration, that of Crashaw, and connect it with Donne, if we can, through the other devotional poets. It is therefore to Crashaw, to St. Theresa, and to Marino that I shall turn next week.[40]

NOTES

1. TSE first likened the development of blank verse to the production of coal-tar – the liquid by-product of the carbonization of coal, from which were derived a wide variety of useful industrial and household products – in "Christopher Marlowe" (98).

2. *Paradiso* II.31-36 (*DC3* 17).

3. Martin Marprelate, the pseudonym signed to a series of vituperative pamphlets (1588-89) against the prelacy of the Church of England. In "The Epistle," the author attacks Thomas Cooper (ca. 1517-94), Bishop of Winchester, as the "most wretched" of Popish bishops for proclaiming to Her Majesty that all is well in the Church: "'Nay,' says my Lord of Winchester, like a monstrous hypocrite – for he is a very dunce, not able to defend an argument, but, till he come to the pinch, he will cog and face it out, for his face is made of seasoned wainscot, and will lie as fast as a dog can trot – 'I have said it. I do say it, and I have said it.' And say I, you shall one day answer it, without repentance, for abusing the Church of God and her Majesty in this sort." *The Marprelate Tracts 1588, 1589*, ed. William Pierce (London: James Clark, 1911), 70-72.

4. *kat' analogian*: according to analogy.

5. *Inferno* X.20-21; *read*: aguzzavan. TSE departs from the Temple Classics translation: "and towards us sharpened their vision, as an aged tailor does at the eye of his needle" (*DC1* 159). These lines are marked in his copy. Dante's encounter with Brunetto Latini later became the model for TSE's ghostly meeting in *Little Gidding*, where the "knitted brows" of the troop of spirits that examine Dante and his guide become "That pointed scrutiny with which we challenge / The first-met stranger in the waning dusk" (*CPP* 140).

6. *Inferno* XV.121-24 (*DC1* 165); TSE's parentheses. TSE discussed the "working of up the emotion" in these lines in "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (109); he remarked upon the emotion of Latini's "excellence in damnation" in his 1920 "Dante" (230).

7. *arrière-pensée*: reservation, ulterior motive.

8. *Antony and Cleopatra* V.ii.344-46. In "Studies in Contemporary Criticism," TSE referred to the last line as a "complicated metaphor" that "makes available some of that physical source of energy upon which the life of language depends" (1.762); in "Philip Massinger" he quoted it as an example Shakespeare's gift for fusing several distinct impressions into a single phrase (247-48); and he returned to the passage in his review of Andrew Marvell's *Miscellaneous Poems*, arguing that it "is not a conceit. For instead of contrast we have fusion" (456).

9. "The Funerall," ll. 1-8 (*MLP* 18).

10. In Donne's usage "subtile" denotes the most delicate sense of "thin," a literal meaning obscured by the accumulated connotations of "subtle" and by the tendency of most modern editions to print the modernized spelling of the word.

11. Lines 1-11 (*MLP* 21).

12. TSE first discussed this line in "Reflections on Contemporary Poetry, I" (1917), where he applauded the balance it achieves between feeling and the material symbol (1.574); he remarked on the effectiveness of its sudden contrast in "The Metaphysical Poets" (376).

13. *concetti*: conceits. TSE derives the term from *Secentismo e marinismo in Inghilterra*, where Praz uses it in relation to Donne.

14. Lines 12-22 (*MLP* 21).

15. TSE's translation from *Secentismo e marinismo in Inghilterra*: "mentre negli altri cantori il resto della poesia vibra tutto sotto l'impulso di quell'impeto iniziale, . . . nel Donne invece l'impeto è subito . . . reciso da un anticlimax di natura raziocinativa" (102).

16. Lines 25-40 (*MLP* 20).

17. TSE alludes to the "jeune demoiselle," the object of Laforgue's cynical day-dreaming about the ideal woman in the first "Dimanches" of *Derniers Vers* (1886), and to "Les Jeunes Filles" who come to represent womankind as a whole in the second "Dimanches"; TSE discusses both in Lecture VIII.

18. TSE quotes the final words of Donne's "Loves Alchymie," which concludes with a similarly cynical warning: "Hope not for minde in women; at their best / Sweetnesse and wit, they' are but *Mummy*, possest" (Grierson 1:40).

19. *recherche de l'absolu*: quest for the absolute. The phrase originates in Balzac's *La Recherche de l'Absolu* (1834), in which the protagonist, Balthazar Claes, possessed by his chemical search for the Absolute, or the philosopher's stone, is warned of the tyranny of the quest by a Polish officer who tried unsuccessfully to relinquish his own pursuit: "My inmost soul is rapt in the contemplation of one fixed idea, engrossed by one all absorbing thought – the Quest for the Absolute." Trans. George Saintsbury (London: Dent, 1895), 78.

20. See "'Rhetoric' and Poetic Drama" (83).

21. TSE read the work of Edmund Husserl in July 1914 at Marburg University, describing it to his Harvard mentor as "terribly hard, but very interesting; and I like very much what I think I understand of it" (*L1* 65). Professor Hermann Cohen (1842-1918), leader of the neo-Kantian school at Marburg, was described by T. E. Hulme, who preceded TSE at Marburg, in *Speculations*: "I remember being completely overawed by the vocabulary and scientific method of the various philosophers of the Marburg School, and in particular by Hermann Cohen's 'Logik der reinen Erkenntniss'. . . . It becomes possible to see a good deal of Cohen's work as the rigid, scientific expression of an attitude that is neither rigid nor scientific, but sometimes romantic, and always humanist" (19). TSE wrote to Herbert Read in May 1923 about the effects of jargon on the quality of prose in technical studies: "Economics is ruined by it, although Adam Smith could write well" (*L2* 139).

22. TSE associated the style of Donne's sermons with the analogical, repetitive method of the "Fire Sermon" (from the *Mahā-vagga*, an early Buddhist text), to which he refers in *TWL* and in "The Preacher as Artist" (167). Offering other examples of the technique in the same review, he quoted from the first of Bishop Hugh Latimer's "Sermons on the Card" (1529) and commented on an excerpt from Donne's two-part sermon on Matthew 4:18-20 (1619), printed as "Mundus Mare" in Logan Pearsall Smith's *Donne's Sermons* (72-74).

23. "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" (*MLP* 14-15); TSE proceeds to quote the poem in full in the ensuing discussion.

24. "Marinism": also "secentismo," the baroque, ornate style initiated by the Italian poet Giambattista Marino, about whom TSE read at length in Praz's *Secentismo e marinismo in Inghilterra* (596).

25. *Trans*: "Love that is born of loving like delight / Within my heart sojourneth / And fashions a new person from desire, / Yet toppleth down to vileness all his might." From "Ballata XII," trans. Ezra Pound, *The Sonnets and Ballate of Guido Cavalcanti* (Boston: Small, Maynard, 1912), 111-12. *Read*: "de simil piacere, / Dentro dal cor si posa, / Formando di desio"

26. *Purgatorio* XVIII.28-33 (*DC2* 217); these lines are marked in TSE's copy.

27. *vers de société*: light, witty verse treating of polite society.

28. Donne's *The First Anniversarie* ("An Anatomie of the World," 1611) and *The Second Anniversarie* ("Of the Progresse of the Soule," 1612).

29. From *The Second Anniversarie*, ll. 9-20 (Grierson 1:251).

30. "The Definition of Love," ll. 1-4 (*MLP* 77).

31. Likely a slip for Marvell's "Upon Appleton House," which TSE briefly criticized for some of its "undesirable images" in "Andrew Marvell" (313).

32. *jeux d'esprit*: playful displays of wit or cleverness.

33. From TSE's copy of the Muses' Library edition of Marvell's *Poems*, ed. G. A. Aitkin (London: Routledge, 1904), 56-57.

34. From "The Exequy," ll. 111-14 (*MLP* 206). TSE remarked on the concentrated emotion of Henry King's "An Exequy to his Matchlesse Never to be Forgotten Friend" in "Prose and Verse" (327); he called it "one of the finest poems of the age" and reflected upon its effects of terror in "The Metaphysical Poets" (377); and in his 1923 review of Marvell's *Miscellaneous Poems*, he wrote of these lines: "If the drum were left out it would cease to be a conceit – but it would lose the valuable associations which the drum gives it" (456).

35. "To Julia to Expedite her Promise" (ll. 1-9), as printed in Saintsbury's *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period*, vol III (1921), 83.

36. TSE quotes from Canto I, stanzas 36-37 of "Theophilia," as printed in Saintsbury's *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period*, vol I (1905), 337.

37. Praz concluded his letter to TSE of 31 Jan 1927 with a comment on Gertrude Stein: "Very amusing your remark about Miss Stein's verse; an extremely valuable exercise for unused parts of the mind. But is it not better to let those parts of the mind get entirely atrophied?"

38. John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester (1647-80), poet and courtier, was known for his scandalous reputation in the court of Charles II and his amorous lyrics and satiric verses, notably *A Satire against Mankind* (1675).

39. TSE alludes to Henry James's technique of reascending the "stream" of thought behind his tales and novels in the Prefaces to the New York Edition of his works, particularly to the often quoted phrase in the Preface to *The American* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907): "as I remount the stream of composition" (xii).

40. After delivering this fourth lecture on 16 Feb, TSE decided in the interim to lecture on Donne's long poems on 23 Feb and to delay his lecture on Crashaw until 2 Mar.

Lecture V

Donne's Longer Poems

It has seemed to me desirable that in this lecture, before passing on to Crashaw and Cowley, I should consider the longer poems of Donne in their main groups: the Satires, the Epistles, the Voyage,[1] the "Anatomy of the World," and the "Progress of the Soul." The longer poems, and especially the Satires, contributed as much or more toward his original reputation as the short poems better known to most of us. It is not therefore unprofitable to determine how far the metaphysical, and how far the conceited, enter into these poems.

Enough has been said, I think, to suggest that "metaphysical poetry" in general, and "metaphysical poetry" of the seventeenth century in particular, has not one positive and unmoving centre upon which one can put the finger. If you concentrate upon the work of one man, you introduce elements which are not metaphysical at all and you exclude others equally metaphysical with those found in that man's work. We have seen that the conceit is, in England, due to various fusions of the influence of Donne with the influence from Italy, and perhaps more difficult influences to define also. By the dangerous method of comparing isolated figure of speech with figure, we can find certainly fullblown conceits in Donne, innumerable; and what look very much like conceits in the work of earlier and much more truly Elizabethan men. The perfect example of the conceit is not to be found. For when you go past Donne to slightly later men, you find that the conceit has developed under Italian influence, but also that it has lost something conceited which was personal to Donne. It is only by grasping the movement of the whole period, from Elizabeth to Cromwell, as an integrity, that one can form any conception of the conceit or of this type of metaphysical poetry. And as the frontiers are nowhere, even in the work of one man, clearly defined, we must be content to examine some poetry which is not, on the face of it, metaphysical.

Of the two groups of Donne's poems which I now propose to examine, that which includes the Satires and the Epistles is apparently the less metaphysical. However, the nature of satiric poetry is (or was) such that its exercise gave play to some of the faculties, which became completely developed

in his metaphysical poetry. And by this I do not mean that Donne was a satirist in the modern sense, or that the irony and wit displayed in other of his poems is in the same sense of a satiric kind. For we must be quite clear on this point: that "satire" has two meanings – one is a verse form, or genre, the other a mood or attitude. It is the fact that there are these two meanings, usually undistinguished, that tends to stultify the conscientious, comprehensive and intelligent book of Professor Hugh Walker on English Satire.[2] You can certainly trace the history of a form; it is perhaps possible to trace the history of a mood; it is almost impossible to trace the history of what is now one, now the other, and sometimes both. By the time you have admitted Chaucer, Thackeray, both Samuel Butlers, as well as Swift,[3] there seems little reason for making your history of Satire anything but a general history of English Literature. As for Satire as a genre of verse, I confess that it would be very difficult to trace the history of that even, and mark the point of its disappearance, in English verse. Does it end with, let us say, Churchill, or does it include Crabbe?[4] And all we can do is to point to its origins, and define the nature of its origins – that is to say, the feeling or feelings which allied with poetic talent required this particular outlet, and measure the English practitioners by the degree of their divergences from the originals.

Now Skelton and Dunbar, and Langland, are "satiric" writers in the modern sense, but they did not write "satires" or *saturae*.[5] The satire, as a form, is of course derived from Persius and Juvenal, and it is only in relation to these authors, I think, especially Persius, that the satires of Donne are to be understood.[6] In Latin satire, as Conington well said, "the poet pours out desultory thoughts on contemporary subjects in his own person . . . familiar compositions in verse . . . relieved from the trammels which necessarily bind every dramatic production."[7] It was, or was eminently supposed to be, by the early Latinising English satirists, a character of satiric verse to be even affectedly rough and unpolished, and they outdid Persius or Juvenal in roughness. Satire seems to have responded, with the late Elizabethan satirists, as well as with the Roman (Persius is said to have shown no enthusiasm for Seneca)[8] to a need for relief from the sublime – as did the Aristophanic farce among the Athenians. Latin poetry was not wholly of the sublime order; but on the whole its descriptions were limited and its emotions purified and simplified beyond those of daily life. Indignation (a vague term) is not a principle but a by-product, of satire; it is the topicality of indignation which makes it appropriate to satire; it is an emotion which

we undergo more frequently than love, and it merges very easily into the peevishness and irritability which we experience every day, and which also we can sometimes relieve by composing verses. I do not purpose to analyse the spirit of formal satire in detail; that would involve an examination almost line by line of several satirists; I only wish to indicate that the satiric spirit is not simple but complex, and that a number of qualities, and perhaps a number of defects, go to the formation of the satiric poet. One of the qualities is an active ratiocinative intellect, interested in a variety of subjects rather than co-ordinated to one intent; and another is a keen eye for common observation. Both of these Donne had.

Certainly the indignation in Donne's satire is wholly faked, and in conformity with tradition. Indignation was never the strong side of satire. If we suspect that of Persius and Juvenal, how can we put up with that of Marston, who lays it on with a trowel, and gives us nothing else?

> Grim-fac't Reproofe, sparkle with threatening eye!
> Bend thy sowerr browes in my tart poesy!
> Avaunt! yee curres, houle in some cloudy mist,
> Quake to behold a sharp-fangd satyrist!

he cries in *The Scourge of Villainy* (1598);[9] and I am much mistaken if any cur, listening to this sharp-fanged satirist, would do anything but curl and go to sleep. Marston under the shadow of Rome probably took himself seriously. But with Donne a very different note is heard.

> Away thou fondling motley humorist,
> Leave mee, and in this standing woodden chest,
> Consorted with these few bookes, let me lye
> In prison, and here be coffin'd, when I dye;
> Here are Gods conduits, grave Divines; and here
> Natures Secretary, the Philosopher;
> And jolly Statesmen, which teach how to tie
> The sinewes of a cities mistique bodie;
> Here gathering Chroniclers, and by them stand
> Giddie fantastique Poëts of each land.[10]

While the soul of Juvenal may have entered into Ben Jonson (see the prologues to *The Poetaster* and *Catiline*)[11] and, if so, greatly advanced by the transmigration, the clothes of Persius are assumed by Donne.[12] Donne in his satires is the parent of Dryden, and Oldham. But let us look first at the

overtones which Donne in the piece quoted, and in his satires generally, manages to convey. "This standing woodden chest, / Consorted with these few bookes, let me lye / In prison" – is that not truly Donne? It does not matter that Donne loved the Court as much as anybody; it does not matter [that] his hatred of courtiers, so far as it is sincere, is that of a man who spent a large part of his life, and wrote a great many of his letters, in courting courtiers. What matters is that in this loose and desultory form of Satire he found a type of poetry which could convey his random thoughts and reflections, exercise his gift for phrasing, his interest in the streets of London, his irritability and spleen. "Here are Gods conduits, grave Divines."

> Not though a Captaine do come in thy way
> Bright parcell gilt, with forty dead mens pay . . . . . .
> At last his Love he in a windowe spies,
> And like light dew exhal'd, he flings from mee
> Violently ravish'd to his lechery.[13]

This in its fun, in its dexterity of phrase, suggests no one more than Dryden; though it is truest Donne.

Satire, though it professes blunt plain speech, and repudiates elegance and fine writing, yet lends itself to a crabbedness and ingeniosity of wit that portends the conceit. Persius, though he ridicules *Berecyntius Attis* and *costam longo subduximus Appennio* ("We have fetched off a rib from the long sides of Appennius") (1.95),[14] utters sometimes phrases like

> liquido cum plasmate guttur
> mobile collueris . . . . . .

("after gargling your supple throat by a liquid process of tuning")[15] which seems to me, who am no Latin scholar, tortured and fantastic enough. So Donne

> Like a wedge in a blocke, wring to the barre,
> Bearing-like Asses; and more shamelesse farre
> Then carted whores, lye, to the grave Judge; for
> Bastardy abounds not in Kings titles, nor
> Symonie and Sodomy in Churchmens lives,
> As these things do in him. . . . .[16]

verses which might well have shocked both the mind and the ear of Dryden – though they have to our ear, a kind of grating harmony which becomes in time very pleasing. They hardly bear out the assertion of Dryden concerning the heroic couplet, that the rhyme "bounds and circumscribes the fancy"![17]

The Satires are one step in the development of a metaphysic wit; the Elegies were more important. I agree with Professor Grierson that they are based on facts, rather than, as Sir Edmund Gosse accepts them, a literary transcription of a certain love-affair.[18] They are still more different from Ovid and Propertius[19] – whom Donne should have at this period admired, whether he did or not – than the Satires are from Persius and Juvenal. I agree with Grierson that the "depravity is in part a reflected depravity,"[20] and I should add that the passion is in large part a reflected passion – I find in it far less intensity than either of the two Roman poets, Ovid and Propertius, who also belonged to a civilisation which, with all its limitations, was far more mature than Donne's. The young Propertius is far more mature, with a Latin maturity, far more experienced in disillusion and disgust, than the young Donne; he writes of experience that made and spoilt his life, Donne only, at most, of a passing adventure. The description, the epithet of Donne, is exact; the feeling artificial. His Satires have that same ferocity of language which would have made us wait in St. Paul's all night to hear a two hour sermon by him; and the ferocity is in the language rather than in the experience. The first is typical, and is one of the best.

Fond woman, which would'st have thy husband die,
And yet complain'st of his great jealousie;
If swolne with poyson, hee lay in'his last bed,
His body with a sere-barke covered,
Drawing his breath, as thick and short, as can
The nimblest crocheting Musician,
Ready with loathsome vomiting to spue
His Soule out of one hell, into a new,
Made deafe with his poore kindreds howling cries,
Begging with few feign'd tears, great legacies,
Thou would'st not weepe, but jolly, 'and frolicke bee,
As a slave, which to morrow should be free;
Yet weep'st thou, when thou seest him hungerly
Swallow his owne death, hearts-bane jealousie.

O give him many thanks, he'is courteous,
That in suspecting kindly warneth us.
Wee must not, as wee us'd, flout openly,
In scoffing ridles, his deformitie;
Nor at his boord together being fatt,
With words, nor touch, scarce lookes adulterate.
Nor when he swolne, and pamper'd with great fare,
Sits downe, and snorts, cag'd in his basket chaire,
Must wee usurpe his owne bed any more,
Nor kisse and play in his house, as before.
Now I see many dangers; for that is
His realme, his castle, and his diocesse.
But if, as envious men, which would revile
Their Prince, or coyne his gold, themselves exile
Into another countrie, 'and doe it there,
Wee play'in another house, what should we feare?
There we will scorne his household policies,
His seely plots, and pensionary spies,
As the inhabitants of Thames right side
Do Londons Major; or Germans, the Popes pride.[21]

(The sequence of "household policies" by "pensionary spies" suggests the influence of Ben Jonson, and elsewhere Donne uses the phrase "household spies" entire).[22]

Here we get the voice of the preacher. Compare a sermon of Donne's on Hell with a Catholic sermon, take the sermon on Hell given *in extenso* in James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist*,[23] and you will see that Donne is always transferring his attention from the idea to the figure, and from the figure to an idea suggested by the figure. In this elegy his wit is too lively to keep to the point; and indeed the peculiar fascination of Donne's verse resides in this curious trick of vagrant thought; or it is as if his theme picked up every possible felicity of image and oddity of thought in its neighbourhood, and became as unrecognisable as the sea-god Glaucus.[24] In the famous IV[th] Elegy,[25] for example, we are distracted from the emotion of parting to the vigorous image of the creature he shall be on his return from the seas:

Here take my Picture; though I bid farewell,
Thine, in my heart, where my soule dwels, shall dwell.
'Tis like me now, but I dead, 'twill be more

When wee are shadowes both, than 'twas before.
When weather-beaten I come backe; my hand,
Perhaps with rude oares torne, or Sun beams tann'd,
My face and brest of hairecloth, and my head
With cares rash sodaine stormes, being o'rspread,
My body'a sack of bones, broken within,
And powders blew staines scatter'd on my skinne;

The image of the powder-blue-stained skin is admirable, but what remains of the idea of parting? Even the notion of the meaning of the picture is overlaid; even the image of the sailor himself breaks into its component details. But note that with Donne the emotion, the feeling, does not simply stop at one point, and verbiage begin; rather, it is never verbiage because there is always some emotion or feeling present. We watch a strange kaleidescope of feeling; with suggested images, suggested conceits, the feeling is always melting, changing, into another feeling; we get a kind of unity in flux, which is Donne. There is no structure of thought, but every thought is felt, every image has a peculiar feel to it.

There is only one important trick, but a very important trick it is, of Donne's shorter poems which is not illustrated in most of the longer; it is perhaps one which makes the shorter poems so much more read, and leave so much deeper impression, than the longer. It is the trick, to which I have alluded in a previous lecture,[26] of first stating a simple and startling idea of direct and easily apprehensible emotional value, and then proceeding to all the variations and changes –

I wonder by my troth, what thou, and I
Did, till we lov'd? . . . . .[27]

Twice or thrice had I loved thee . . . . .[28]

I long to talke with some old lovers ghost . . . . .[29]

But all the others are there, including the metrical beauties which Donne discovers everywhere; and I cannot think "The Anatomy of the World" inferior to anything he ever wrote. "The Storm" and "The Calm," so admired by Ben Jonson,[30] illustrate his gift of observation and at the same time the excess of image which both attracts and distracts the eye. In the II[nd] Elegy,[31] we saw how he used, to realise the situation of the jealous husband, certain

obsessing ideas; he conceives the husband on his deathbed; the associations are unexceptionable, yet they seem to conjure up the "friends of the friends" as Henry James might say,[32] the associations of the associations. An image in "The Storm" illustrates this curious disposition clearly;

> Some coffin'd in their cabbins lye, 'equally
> Griev'd that they are not dead, and yet must dye;
> And as sin-burd'ned soules from graves will creepe,
> At the last day, some forth their cabbins peepe:
> And tremblingly'aske what newes, and doe heare so,
> Like jealous husbands, what they would not know.[33]

The associations here are just, and witty. Yet how singular this preoccupation with coffins, the day of judgment, sin, and even, perhaps, with jealous husbands! But to investigate these recesses of Donne's mind is not my *métier*: I wish only to indicate how often we feel that there is something else, some preoccupation, in Donne's mind, besides what he is talking about; his attention is not only often dispersed and volatile; perhaps it is so because it is really distracted. But this bewildering obscurity is part of the attraction of Donne's mind, and is perhaps what gives the peculiar emotional colour to his every idea, and causes the variety and dispersion of his intellectual curiosity.

Donne, is, in a way, part Jesuit and part Calvinist; I venture the suggestion that a profound examination of the doctrines of both sects, and an attempt to entertain both guests on equal terms, might, if it did not kill the experimenter, throw some light on Donne's mind. None of his poems is more difficult, more unpleasant, more disturbing, more satisfactory, or contains more startling lines, than the apparently unfinished "Progress of the Soul."[34] I simply confess myself incapable of understanding this rebus: and no critic that I have perused has given me the slightest help. It is, for me, a voyage into strange seas of feeling,[35] but the feeling I get from it is one I cannot define, and cannot connect with the explicit meaning. I am quite unable to catch the drift of this history of the metamorphosis of the soul which inhabits at one moment or another an apple, a fish, a whale and a monkey. The wildly conceited vision of the whale which

> spouted rivers up, as if he ment
> To joyne our seas, with seas above the firmament,[36]

suggests that Donne probably saw whales on his voyages, but to me it suggests nothing more. Nor am I able to interpret the stanza which is sometimes supposed to refer to Queen Elizabeth:

> For the great soule which here amongst us now
> Doth dwell, and moves that hand, and tongue, and brow,
> Which, as the Moone the sea, moves us; to heare
> Whose story, with long patience you will long;
> (For 'tis the crowne, and last straine of my song)
> This soule to whom *Luther*, and *Mahomet* were
> Prisons of flesh; this soule which oft did teare,
> And mend the wracks of th'Empire, and late Rome,
> And liv'd when every great change did come,
> Had first in paradise, a low, but fatall roome.

I cannot for the life of me see how every line of this stanza can refer to the Queen.[37] But the tendency of the poem is plain: it is a tendency toward intellectual anarchy, from the second line, which I believe springs from the doctrine of some unorthodox scholastic –

> Fate, which God made, but doth not controule. . . .

to the last lines –

> Ther's nothing simply good, nor ill alone,
> Of every quality comparison,
> The onely measure is, and judge, opinion.[38]

I can only offer it to any deep psychologist who may be interested.

But we can turn with confidence to "The Anatomy of the World," for its obscurity is not of the same disturbing kind, and its beauty is much more assured. From one point of view, it is merely a couple of insincere funerary poems on the daughter (whom he had never seen) of a rich man whose favour he wished to cultivate.[39] But I think that insincerity is the last sin of which one would accuse Donne: that is the advantage of being sincerely interested in something else than what you are talking about. It is a meditation upon death. But what a meditation! It has no philosophy, no structure or unity, no "central idea," no real beginning or end; but it is the most metaphysical of all Donne's metaphysical poems.

If the poem is nominally the celebration of the virtues of Drury's dead daughter, and actually a meditation upon death, is it not, in a sense, a poem

of double meaning? By this I do not mean merely an allegory or a puzzle, I mean a category to which certain poetry, which may appear at first sight to be metaphysical, but really is not, belongs. A great exemplar of this type, whom I choose because he may, being a contemporary of Donne, be thought to be himself metaphysical, is Chapman in his tragedies. I have always been impressed, and once discussed in a paper, by the sense of a "double world" in the tragedies of Chapman, and which made me compare him to Dostoevski.[40] Here and there the actors in his drama appear as if following another train of thought, listening to other voices, feeling with other senses, and acting out another scene than that visible upon the stage. Hence they appear irrational and incoherent in the same way as the characters of Dostoevski. In *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois*, for example, there runs the curious theme of reconciliation, quite inconsistent with the motives and intentions of the personages, but never ludicrous, because it seems to belong to another plane of reality from which these persons are exiles. Even in the splendid final outburst of the dying hero of the previous play –

> Fly, my soul,
> To where the evening, in the Iberian vales,
> Bears on her swarthy shoulders Hecate
> Crowned with a grove of oaks; fly, where men feel
> The cunning axletree, and those that suffer
> Beneath the chariot of the snowy Bear,
> And tell them all that D'Ambois now is hasting
> To the eternal dwellers. . . .[41]

it seems as if he, or Chapman through him, is conversing with an immaterial audience. This doubleness is not only found in Chapman; it appears for instance in a more obvious form in Browning's *Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came*. It is as different from the allegory as it is from the daydream, the *Kubla Khan* of Coleridge. As different in principle: in practise it is sometimes very difficult to place a particular poem. In so baffling a poet as Gérard de Nerval, about whom I have never yet been able to make up my mind, there are passages obviously of the daydream type –

> Dans la nuit du tombeau, toi qui m'as consolé,
> Rends-moi le Pausilippe et la mer d'Italie![42]

or

J'ai rêvé dans la grotte où nage la sirène,
Mon front est rouge encore du baiser de la reine. . .[43]

as well as the line so admired by Arthur Symons –

Crains, dans le mur aveugle, un regard qui t'épie![44]

which seems to me consciously of the double-world type. But the metaphysical, as illustrated by "The Anatomy of the World," is different from either the allegorical, the narcotic, or the otherworld. It gives the emotional equivalent of thought, a rarified, but perfectly definite world. Only, whereas with Dante and his circle, the feelings are organised according to an organized view of the universe, so that there is given the feeling-equivalent for every detail in the system and also for the consummation of the system –

La forma universal di questo nodo
credo ch'io vidi, perchè più di largo,
dicendo questo, sentii ch'io godo.

Un punto solo m'è maggior letargo,
che venticinque secoli alla impresa,
che fe' Nettuno ammirar l'ombra d'Argo.[45]

and also for the system as a whole. On the other hand, with Donne – and it is placing Donne very high to compare him to the circle of Dante – the peculiarity is the absence of order, the fraction of thought into innumerable thoughts. Donne is a poet, a true poet, perhaps even a very great poet, of chaos. And this fraction of thought into thoughts means that the only thing that holds his poems, or any one poem, together, is what we call unsatisfactorily the personality of Donne. In this, he is a modern poet. Personality is not only an unsatisfactory term; what we mean or seem to mean or think we mean by it is an unsatisfactory thing.

We must, I think, take "The Anatomy of the World" in this way in order to understand and appreciate. It is a meditation of thoughts floating about separately, floating ideas turned in upon themselves. And, as I think I said in a previous lecture,[46] this introversion has curious consequences; this spectacle of thought in dissolution produces colours and iridescences never apparent in a living and organic system. Let us take a passage, almost at random, from the *First Anniversary*.

Some moneths she hath beene dead (but being dead,
Measures of times are all determined)
But long she'ath beene away, long, long, yet none
Offers to tell us who it is that's gone.[47]

In a parenthesis you have to swallow the idea of the indeterminability of time in the future state, and then pass on at once to the difficult idea, startlingly expressed, of the namelessness of the soul, of its distinction from the breathing composite of soul and body which we knew, and consequently of the deep abyss between two kinds of life that isolates the living from the dead. The feeling is as it were shocked into existence by the suddenness of this; and having evoked it, Donne passes on again. He seems determined to exhaust every possibility of thought and of feeling that can be associated with the death of a young woman. Presently we find him at this point –

Let no man say, the world it selfe being dead,
'Tis labour lost to have discovered
The worlds infirmities, since there is none
Alive to study this dissection;
For there's a kinde of World remaining still,
Though shee which did inanimate and fill
The world, be gone, yet in this last long night
Her Ghost doth walke. . . . .[48]

In these seven and a half lines we have already had two thoughts, two transitions, the beginning of a third thought. To follow these Anniversaries to the end, tasting the full flavour of every idea, is a task requiring not a little application and fortitude.

These are two points of detail to which I would draw your attention. A passage often quoted, and justly admired, is the following –

One, whose cleare body was so pure and thinne,
Because it need disguise no thought within.
'Twas but a through-light scarfe, her minde t' inroule;
Or exhalation breath'd out from her Soule.[49]

Of this beautiful passage, I would only ask you to read the whole poem, and ask, whether this is the view of the relation of body and soul taken everywhere throughout the poem? I think not: it seems to me inconsistent

with my own interpretation of a passage quoted above, with its sharp distinction between soul and body –

yet none
Offers to tell us who it is that's gone.[50]

The question, and similar questions, as you will have seen, are capital: for it is the question, raised already, whether Donne is attending to the meaning of an idea or to its existence (the latter being the Pensée of Descartes).[51]

The other point will have greater interest for us when we come next week to consider the work of Crashaw. It is in the Funeral Elegy to the *First Anniversary* (line 80 in the Grierson edition, page 248):

For though she could not, nor could chuse to dye,
She'ath yeelded to too long an extasie:[52]

Which shows pretty clearly the influence of the *Life* of St. Theresa[53] and perhaps of other Spanish saints (it was St. Philip Neri, I think, he to whom is dedicated the church at Arundel, who became so habitually ecstatic that he was obliged to pray that he might receive the divine influx less frequently).[54]

The *Second Anniversary* is, if anything, more crowded with beauties than the first; it was, as we shall see, characteristic of Crashaw's and of the Italian and the Spanish and even the Dutch poetry of the baroque period to be crowded with beauties; but nowhere, I think, do they occur in greater profusion than in these two poems of Donne. And nowhere did he rise to greater heights of verbal and metrical beauty; everything that we find in his lyrics, everything that we find in his sermons, is here. Compare, for instance, the funeral sermon in which recurs so persistently the word "DEAD," as a musical bar by itself. The passage is given in Mr. Pearsall Smith's selections.[55] Compare it with the recurrence in variation in the *First Anniversary* of

Shee, shee is dead; shee's dead: when thou knowst this,
Thou knowst how lame a cripple this world is. . . . .

Shee, shee is dead; shee's dead: when thou knowst this,
Thou knowst how ugly a monster this world is. . . . .

Shee, shee is dead; shee's dead: when thou knowst this,
Thou knowst how wan a Ghost this our world is. . . . .

Shee, shee is dead; shee's dead: when thou knowst this,
Thou knowst how drie a Cinder this world is. . . .[56]

A precisian might object that if the world is a cripple it cannot be also a cinder. That is a detail: my main point is that this deliberate overstimulation, exploitation of the nerves – for such it is – has in it, to me, something unscrupulous. It is the work of a man of profound and subtle intellect, for whom thought has lost its primary value which it should always have; a voluptuary of thought, as St. Theresa and St. John of the Cross were voluptuaries of religion, recklessly playing his part – for every man's part is a small part – in the destruction of a civilisation.

At this point we terminate our direct connexion with Donne. I have tried to fix the nature of metaphysical poetry as illustrated in Donne; but, as I warned you, we may find the centre of gravity of metaphysicality at a different point with Crashaw, whom we shall consider next week, and at a different point still with Cowley, whom we shall consider the week after. When we have taken up these three in turn, and made the necessary comparison with Dante and with the school of Baudelaire, we shall, I think, have made as complete an examination as possible.

I have, in all probability, made this lecture difficult by keeping your attention upon two points at once: the nature of metaphysical poetry in general involves both the resemblances and the differences between Donne and Dante. The differences involve a certain theory of the disintegration of the intellect in modern Europe. Therefore I would remind you that I am here concerned primarily with poetry, not with modern Europe and its progress or decline; but that if and when I speak of "disintegration," "decay," or "decline," I am unconcerned with the emotional or moral co-efficient of these terms. The "disintegration" of which I speak may be evitable or inevitable, good or bad; to draw its optimistic or pessimistic conclusions is an occupation for prophets and makers of almanacks, of whom I am not one.

NOTES

1. The earliest of Donne's epistles, "The Storme" and "The Calme," are here conflated as "the Voyage" after the adventurous occasions of composition – Donne's presence on the storm-damaged "Islands Voyage" expedition led by the Earl of Essex in search of the Spanish Fleet on its return from the West Indies in the summer of 1597, and on the subsequent expedition to encounter the Fleet in the Azores, where Donne's ship was becalmed.

2. See TSE's review of Walker's *English Satire and Satirists*, which ranges from the pre-Chaucerian satirists of the twelfth century to Samuel Butler in the nineteenth century (593).

3. After teaching several of Thackeray's satires to his Extension classes, TSE wrote to Eleanor Hinckley on 1 Apr 1918: "Thackeray could do the *Yellowplush Papers* and the Steyne part of *Vanity Fair*, but he had a picture of himself as a kindly satirist. Not at all, he hadn't brains enough, nor courage enough to find out really what he could do well, which was high society sordidness, and do it" (*L1* 259). TSE refers to both the Victorian novelist Samuel Butler, author of *The Way of All Flesh*, and the Restoration poet Samuel Butler (1612-80), known for his *Hudibras* (1663-78), a burlesque of the Puritan followers of Cromwell and their Commonwealth.

4. Charles Churchill made severe attacks on theatrical personalities in *The Rosciad* (1761), on political figures in *The Prophecy of Famine* (1763), and on William Hogarth in *An Epistle to William Hogarth* (1763). George Crabbe wrote *The Village* (1783), a realistic satire of the cult of rural simplicity in pastoral literature. In his review later in 1926 of A. G. Barnes's *A Book of English Verse Satire*, TSE observed that Crabbe "seems to belong only just within the confines of satire; his choice of country subjects makes him an anomaly" (790-91).

5. John Skelton frequently wrote poetic satires on ecclesiastics, notably on Cardinal Wolsey in "Why Come Ye Nat to Courte" and "Collyn Clout"; Scots poet William Dunbar wrote satiric verse on court and town life, friars, and women, notably "The Twa Mariit Wemen and the Wedo"; William Langland (ca. 1332-ca. 1400) wrote *Piers Plowman* (ca. 1395), a satire of ecclesiastical corruption.

6. In his 1926 review of *A Book of English Verse Satire*, TSE asserted that A. G. Barnes was right "to date satire only from the period when English poets began consciously to emulate Persius and Juvenal. We are spared the selections from Langland, Skelton, and Dunbar, which would only confuse us, and which most anthology makers would have included" (790).

7. TSE elides and slightly alters the sequence of the quotation from "Lecture on the Life and Writings of Persius" (1855) by John Conington (1825-69), Professor of Latin at Oxford: "It is certainly not a little remarkable that the countrymen of Aristophanes and Menander should not have risen to the full conception of familiar compositions in verse in which the poet pours out desultory thoughts on contemporary subjects in his own person, relieved from the trammels which necessarily bind every dramatic production, however free and unbridled its spirit." *The Satires of A. Persius Flaccus*, ed. Henry Nettleship (Oxford: Clarendon, 1872), xxiv.

8. TSE paraphrases Conington: "At a later period Persius made the acquaintance of Seneca, but did not admire him" (xvi-xvii).

9. From Satyre IX, "Here's a Toy to Mocke an Ape Indeede," ll. 1-4. TSE quotes from the third edition (1599), as printed in vol III of *The Works of John Marston*, ed. J. O. Halliwell (London: John Russell Smith, 1856), 293, borrowed from the London Library.

10. Satyre I (1593), ll. 1-10 (Grierson 1:145).

11. TSE refers to the prologues, replete with Juvenalian violence and intensity, spoken by Sylla's Ghost in *Catiline his Conspiracy* (1611) and by Envy in *The Poetaster; or, His Arraignment* (1602); he remarked on the successes of both in "Ben Jonson" (150).

12. As Gosse writes in *The Life and Letters of John Donne*, "Donne and Hall would be drawn to Persius because, like him, they were young and bookish . . . they took him for a Heaven-sent stoic, who scourged the age and died at twenty-six. . . . To resemble Persius to reproduce his manner, was evidently the devout aim of Marston and Donne, Hall and Guilpin alike'" (1:34).

13. Satyre I, ll. 17-18, 106-08 (Grierson 1:145, 149).

14. Persius, Satire I, line 95; trans. Conington, *The Satires*, 27.

15. Persius, Satire I, ll. 17-18; trans. Conington, *The Satires*, 13.

16. Satyre II (1593), ll. 71-76 (Grierson 1:152).

17. "To Roger, Earl of Orrery," prefixed to *The Rival Ladies* (1664): "But that benefit which I consider most in it, because I have not seldom found it, is, that it bounds and circumscribes the fancy." Dryden, *Dramatic Essays*, 187.

18. In his Introduction to *The Poems of John Donne* (1912), Grierson asserts: "Whether we can accept in its entirety the history of Donne's early amours which Mr. Gosse has gathered from the poems or not, there can be no doubt that actual experiences do lie behind these poems as behind Shakespeare's sonnets" (xli). Gosse had argued in *The Life and Letters of John Donne* that the *Songs and Sonnets* and the *Elegies* must be read together as "the adventures of his body and soul" (1:63), particularly as an accurate record of Donne's illicit passion for a beautiful married lady: "His heart, hitherto whole and callous, was shattered into reflecting fragments like a mirror, was torn into rags like a garment. His passion completely overwhelmed him; for the first time, though he had loved so often, he felt the genuine tyranny of love" (68).

19. TSE alludes to Ovid's *Amores*, poems which depict the stages of his love affair with a certain Corinna, and to Propertius's *Cynthia Monobiblos* [A Single Book Devoted to Cynthia] (ca. 30-28 BC), primarily a depiction of his turbulent affair with his mistress.

20. Grierson writes in his Introduction to *The Poems of John Donne*: "And yet even in these more cynical and sensual poems a careful reader will soon detect a difference between Donne and Ovid. He will begin to suspect that the English poet is imitating the Roman, and that the depravity is in part a reflected depravity" (xl).

21. Elegie I, "Jealosie," quoted in full (Grierson 1:79-80).

22. TSE refers to Jonson's description of the beneficent "household" in "To Penshurst" and to the seducer's confidence that he and Celia can "delude the eyes / Of a few poor household spies" in "Come, my Celia, let us prove," a lyric from *Volpone* III.vii.165-83. Donne used the latter phrase in Elegie XII, line 41: "And those so ambush'd round with houshold spies" (Grierson 1: 101). TSE quoted the passage from *Volpone* as an exemplary "alliance of levity and seriousness" in "Andrew Marvell" (312).

23. *in extenso*: at full length. Joyce's fictional Father Arnall gives the Jesuit Sermon on Hell at the annual retreat in Chapter III of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916).

24. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book XIII, Glaucus, fisherman of Anthedon in Boeotia, is changed into a sea-god after eating a divine herb sown by Saturn. In his 1920 "Dante" essay, TSE quoted Dante's allusion to the transformation of Glaucus in *Paradiso* I.67-69, and he later returned to it in "Dante" (1929), offering a translation: "Gazing on her, so I became within, as did Glaucus, on tasting of the grass which made him sea-fellow of the other gods" (232; *SE* 265).

25. A slip for Elegy V, "His Picture," ll. 1-10 (Grierson 1:86-87).

26. See Lecture IV (672-75).

27. "The Good-Morrow," ll. 1-2 (*MLP* 1).

28. "Aire and Angels," line 1 (*MLP* 7).

29. "Loves Deitie," line 1 (Grierson 1:54).

30. Jonson's admiration for Donne's "The Bracelet" (Elegy XI) and "The Calme" is recorded in *Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden* (1619): "his verses of the Lost Chaine, he heth by Hert & that passage of the calme, that dust and feathers doe not stirr, all was

so quiet. Affirmeth Done to have written all his best pieces err he was 25 years old." *Ben Jonson*, vol I, ed. C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson (Oxford: Clarendon, 1925), 135; the three-volume edition is in TSE's library.

31. A slip for Elegie I, "Jealosie," quoted above (n. 21).

32. An allusion to James's story, "The Friends of the Friends," which originally appeared as "The Way It Came" (1896) before it was retitled and published in vol 17 of *The Novels* and *Tales of Henry James* (New York Edition), 1907-09. TSE later wrote about James to Herbert Read on 18 Jan 1927, revealing that he liked "some of his poorer stuff better than his best; in his poorer stuff something bigger appears without his knowing it – e.g. I like especially 'The Altar of the Dead' & 'The Friends of the Friends'" (*L3* 378).

33. "The Storme," ll. 45-50 (Grierson 1: 176).

34. Donne's unfinished satire, "The Progresse of the Soule," dated 16 Aug 1601, was originally titled "Metempsychosis"; though unfinished, at 520 lines it is Donne's longest poem (not to be confused with the later "Of the Progress of the Soul: The Second Anniversary" [1612]).

35. A mock allusion to a later addition to *The Prelude* (1850), Book III, ll. 62-63, in which Wordsworth describes the "silent face" of Newton's statue in the antechapel of Trinity College, Cambridge as "The marble index of a mind forever / Voyaging through strange seas of thought alone." *The Prelude; or, Growth of a Poet's Mind* (London: Dent, 1904), 39.

36. "The Progresse of the Soule," ll. 319-20 (Grierson 1: 308).

37. "The Progresse of the Soule," ll. 61-70 (Grierson 1:297). TSE disagrees with Grierson's commentary on the stanza: "it is evident from the poem that in his first intention Queen Elizabeth herself was to be the soul's last host. It is impossible to attach any other meaning to the seventh stanza" (Grierson 2:219).

38. "The Progresse of the Soule," ll. 2, 518-20 (Grierson 1:295, 316).

39. When Elizabeth Drury, the fourteen-year-old daughter of Sir Robert Drury (1575-1615), died suddenly in Dec 1610, Donne was prompted to write "A Funerall" for the grieving parents. Sir Robert, a wealthy landowner who had been no more than a slight acquaintance, befriended Donne and invited him to the Continent as his secretary. Before their departure late in 1611, Donne wrote an extended complement to the first poem, "An Anatomy of the World," and the two were published together as *An Anatomy of the World* (1611), rpt. as *The First Anniversarie: An Anatomie of the World* (1612).

40. TSE gave his lecture on "A Neglected Aspect of Chapman" before the Cam Literary Club at Cambridge on 8 Nov 1924 (548).

41. The dying protagonist speaks these lines in *Bussy D'Ambois* V.iv.101-07. TSE's 1904 issue of W. L. Phelp's Mermaid edition of *George Chapman* (1895) misprints "cunning axletree" for "burning axletree" (216). *Read*: "Fly, where the evening from th'Iberian vales, / Takes on her swarthy shoulders Hecate, / Crown'd with a grove of oaks: fly where men feel / The cunning axletree: and those that suffer / Beneath the chariot of the snowy Bear: / And tell them all that D'Ambois now is hasting / To the eternal dwellers."

TSE first misquoted this passage in "Reflections on Contemporary Poetry [IV]" (1919), and in that year he adapted a line from it in "Gerontion" – "whirled / Beyond the circuit of the shuddering Bear" (*CPP* 26). In "Seneca in Elizabethan Translation" (1927) he later observed how Seneca's lines "must have lain long in the memory of Chapman before they came out in *Bussy d'Ambois*," and again in the Conclusion to *The Use of Poetry* (1933) he discussed "the

probability that this imagery had some personal saturation value, so to speak, for Seneca; another for Chapman, and another for myself . . . I suggest that what gives it such intensity as it has in each case is its saturation . . . with feelings too obscure for the authors even to know quite what they were" (*SE* 74; *UPUC* 146).

42. *Trans*: "In the darkness of my grave, you who have consoled me, / Give me back Posilipo and the Italian sea." From "El Desdichado" [The Disconsolate One], ll. 5-6, by Gérard de Nerval (1808-55). Trans. Geoffrey Wagner, *Selected Writings of Gérard de Nerval* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1970), 213.

43. *Trans*: "I have dreamed in the cave where the siren swims . . . My brow is still red from the queen's kiss . . ." TSE reverses the order of ll. 10-11 from "El Desdichado"; trans. Wagner, 213. These lines may inform the concluding stanza of "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock": "We have lingered in the chambers of the sea / By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown" (*CPP* 7). TSE quotes the second line of "El Desdichado," "Le prince d'Aquitaine à la tour abolie," in the concluding passage of *TWL*, line 430 (*CPP* 50).

44. *Trans*: "Fear then, in the blind wall, the prying glance." Trans. Wagner, 255. From Nerval's "Vers dorées" [Gilded Verses], line 9. Arthur Symons quotes this line in *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*, calling the poem one of Nerval's "great sonnets" and concluding: "that fear of the invisible watchfulness of nature was never absent from him." Rev. edn. (New York: Dutton, 1919), 19.

45. *Paradiso* XXXIII.91-96; *read*: "dicendo questo, mi sento ch'io godo." For translation, see TSE's quotation of these lines in Lecture I (626, n. 30).

46. Lecture II (639).

47. "An Anatomie of the World," ll. 39-42 (Grierson 1:232).

48. Lines 63-70 (Grierson 1:233).

49. "A Funerall Elegie," ll. 59-62 (Grierson 1: 247).

50. "An Anatomie of the World," ll. 41-42 (Grierson 1: 232).

51. In Cartesian terminology, "pensée" (also "cogitatio") designates the existence of all mental phenomena, akin to consciousness; Descartes distinguishes between "thought" in this sense and other mental phenomena, such as ideas, volitions, and judgments, in the *Les Méditations métaphysiques*, III: "De Dieu; qu'il existe" [*Meditations on First Philosophy*, III: "Of God; that He Exists"].

52. "A Funerall Elegie," ll. 81-82 (Grierson 1: 248).

53. Saint Teresa of Ávila wrote her autobiography, *Libro de la vida* [The Book of her Life], between 1563 and 1565; it was published in Spanish in 1588 and first translated into English as *The Life of Mother Teresa of Jesus* in 1611. Though Donne does not refer directly to Saint Teresa, there are several analogous passages in their works, as Mary Ramsay had observed in *Les Doctrines médiévales chez Donne* (235).

54. See Lecture II (637). TSE likely read Donne's account of this anecdote in "A Sermon Preached at Paul's Cross" (1616): "This is that Pureness in the *Romane Church*, by which the founder of the last Order amongst them, *Philip Nerius*, had not only utterly emptied his heart of the world, but had fill'd it too full of God; for, so (say they) he was fain to cry sometimes, *Recede a me Domine*, O Lord go farther from me, and let me have a less portion of thee" (*Ser* I, 186; repeated in *Ser* VII, 334). The tenth of the twelve panels representing stages of St. Philip Neri's life in the Chapel of St. Philip, Arundel, depicts him rapt in ecstasy while offering Mass.

55. "Death of James I" (*Donne's Sermons*, 57-58; *Ser* VI, 290): "When you shall find that hand that had signed to one of you a *Patent* for *Title*, to another for *Pension*, to another for *Pardon*, to another for *Dispensation*, *Dead*: That hand that settled Possessions by his *Seale*, in the *Keeper*, and rectified *Honours* by the *sword*, in his *Marshall*, and distributed relief to the *Poore*, in his *Almoner*, and *Health* to the *Diseased*, by his *immediate Touch*, Dead." The refrain is repeated several more times in the passage.

56. "An Anatomie of the World," ll. 237-38, 325-26, 369-70, 427-28 (Grierson 1: 238, 241-42, 244).

Lecture VI

Crashaw

I feel some sense of shame at having arranged matters so that, after devoting four lectures solely to Donne, I must condense what I have to say about Crashaw into one. But I would remind you, in extenuation, that what I have undertaken is not a series of lectures on metaphysical poets, but an attempt to deal with three poets as different examples of metaphysical poetry, and of the metaphysical poetry of that age in particular. Donne's mind is typical of his age, but his poetry is not altogether typical of the poetry of his age; and it was with him a much greater difficulty than with the others, to distinguish that which is peculiar to him from that which is general of the period. I have insisted that Donne is not in any way mediaeval; but he is not a pure type; for he represents the transition from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century; Crashaw represents the more serious aspect of the Caroline mind; and owing to the influences which he absorbed, and the life which he lived, is also more representative of the mind of Europe. But I shall attempt in this lecture – not to enter upon a discussion of his mind and the world in which he lived – for that would distract us from our purpose, and I intend to consider this more fully in written studies – and indeed a book of the length, scope and importance of Sainte-Beuve's *Port-Royal* might be written on this subject[1] – but merely to indicate his most important differences from Donne.

Donne was born in 1573; Crashaw in 1612.[2] The difference of nearly forty years is important. By the time that Crashaw was old enough to pick and choose for himself, the currents which had been gathering head in Italy, Spain and France were strong enough to unite with the already-great prestige of Donne in England in forming his generation. Subtract from Donne the powerful intellect, substitute a feminine for a strongly masculine nature, posit a devotional temperament rather than a theological mind, and add the influence of Italian and Spanish literature, take note of the changes in the political and ecclesiastical situation in England, and you have Crashaw. Crashaw was a man of learning, and a man of some intellect; but he was primarily a devotional, a fervent, temperament; a Roman Catholic, he would have had more in common with Cardinal Newman

than with Thomas Aquinas.[3] The current of feeling that starts with Newman, and passes through Arnold, Ruskin, and Pater to Francis Thompson, Lionel Johnson, Aubrey Beardsley, and even in a degraded and popularised form to Oscar Wilde, had not quite dwindled away. It would be a matter of too much difficulty, and an enterprise of too great extent for my present purpose, to show how sensibility and intellect have been divided against each other since the seventeenth century; I assume this part of my thesis; I only point out that this, like the problem of soul and body discussed in the third lecture, is another dichotomy not found in the *trecento*; and that Crashaw is one of those who are on the side of feeling rather than thought.

There are a few main points to remember about Crashaw. He was born into an atmosphere of religious devotion. He lost his mother, and even his step-mother, very early;[4] it is possible that unsatisfied filial cravings are partly responsible for his adoration of St. Theresa. (Incidentally, it is possible that St. Theresa herself suffered from somewhat the same trouble; we remark that in her vision of paradise, the first persons she identified were her father and mother).[5] His father had a library stocked at least with the Latin verse of the epoch, and this Latin verse was largely Jesuit in origin.[6] For the Jesuits, as I observed in an early lecture,[7] had originated a vast campaign of propaganda among persons of culture. On the one hand they did not fail to encourage among their order those members who showed a talent for philosophical speculation or for controversy, but on the other, they realised that an appeal to the sensibility is, for making converts, worth all your philosophy,[8] and many of the order were actually engaged in composing verses which are by no means without literary merit. I suppose that, taking it in bulk, it would compare more than favourably with the same number of tons of printed verse of today in the vernacular. Jesuitism came to Donne through the intellect, and in his mind and memory it had to compete with Calvinism, Lutheranism, and everything else. It entered Crashaw's mind through poetry, by the sensibility and emotions, and it found practically nothing in his mind to struggle against.

It is very little wonder that Crashaw found the poetry of Italy, already strongly affected by Jesuit taste, very much to his liking; it is no wonder that before he joined the Church of Rome he found the church of Archbishop Laud the most sympathetic, of Laud who took his stand for the liturgy and "the beauty of holiness."[9] And going up to Cambridge, and finding congenial company as a don of one of the colleges which most stoutly stood by

Laud and King Charles, a college which was later to suffer most severely for its loyalty;[10] and, the motherless young man, falling under the influence of the remarkable Mary Collett, and the cloistral society of Little Gidding near Huntingdon:[11] could his life have followed any other course, could it have ended otherwise than it did? He was buried in Italy, after finding the bread of exile very salt, and the stairs of the Vatican very steep, and the "gente" indeed "malvagia e scempia."[12] He was a born convert. He was Marius the Epicurean.[13]

I have to show how the influence of St. Theresa coalesced with that of Giambattista Marino, how this Spanish-Italian influence combined with that of Donne, and how the result differs from the work of Donne. Incidentally, to show how the conceit of Crashaw differs from that of Donne.

It is not quite clear how much Spanish Crashaw knew. It is reported that he picked it up, with Italian, by solitary study. It is more probable that he knew Italian well than that he knew Spanish well; and he may have read the life of St. Theresa (Mother Theresa as she was then called) in an English translation of 1612.[14] Theresa's autobiography is almost essential to any understanding of Crashaw. It is not only a very interesting book, but a really great book; it is great because of the real beauty of character, and the transparent honesty and scrupulousness and piety of the writer. When, for instance, she tells how the Lord took her crucifix from her, and returned it adorned with pearls, she adds conscientiously that no one was ever able to see the pearls except herself.[15] (Seventeenth-century poetry is much like a crucifix ornamented with pearls, except that we are able with some trouble to perceive the pearls). But what I wish to emphasise is that the tendency of St. Theresa is to substitute divine love for human love, and for the former to take on the characteristics of the latter. Into the psychological implications I do not care to go; they have already been discussed by Brenier de Montmorand and somewhat by Henri Delacroix;[16] they are irrelevant to my thesis; and it would be necessary to defend the memory of a great saint against calumny or degradation. I only point out the literary consequences of this substitution. In contrast, Dante and his contemporaries were quite aware that human love and divine love were different, and that one could not be substituted for the other without distortion of the human nature. Their effort was to enlarge the boundary of human love so as to make it a stage in the progress toward the divine. Dante's words before Beatrice appears to him in the *Purgatorio*[17†] leave no doubt that his feeling toward Beatrice in heaven, an exalted feeling toward an exalted being, differs in

kind from his feeling on the revelation of the godhead. The fire runs through his body –

Cognosco i segni dell antica fiamma

he says.[18] But of the poetry of the *seicento* Signor Praz says truly that "the general tendency of the epoch was to make the divine passions a true mirror of the human passions."[19] It has been, I think – it is for me, at all events – one of the reasons for the general inferiority, or let us say less positively, of the general unsatisfactoriness, of the devotional verse of the last three hundred years, this substitution of the divine passion by the human. Instead of being presented with a new passion, we find only the old one with a new, and slightly unreal object. The emotion is the same emotion watered down. I used to think that my inability to feel devotional verse – such as that of Christina Rossetti, who is a diluted Theresa – was due to the weakness of my own flesh and spirit; but that was before I had read the *Paradiso*, or any of the Latin hymns from Prudentius to Aquinas.[20]

If my criticism of the way in which St. Theresa and Crashaw sought religious ecstasy is just, it is applicable to nearly all religious verse since their times. These two are the finest, the most passionate examples of the type. It is, I think, the same thing in George Herbert, allowing for the fact that Herbert was a man of far less intensity altogether, that he was not celibate, that he was a member of the Church of England instead of the Church of Rome, that he walked slightly to the left of the *via media*,[21] that he was quite a normal human being who partook his affections between his wife and his God. It is the same in most of the minor devotional verse without Herbert's sometimes startling felicity of phrase. That there are exceptions I do not deny: an age is to be judged by the way the scale inclines. But the exceptions seem to me almost accidents. The famous line of Vaughan

I saw Eternity the other night
Like a great ring of light[22]

is an accidental echo of Dante's

La forma universal' di questo nodo
Credo ch'io vidi. . .

Ciò ch'io dico è un semplice lume . . .[23]

It is a moment of contemplation, not enjoyment. But Vaughan is too much a poet of lines rather than poems, for our purpose.[24]

Donne might be called a voluptuary of thought; Crashaw could be called a voluptuary of religious emotion. He has a more ingenious wit, he has stronger feeling, than his Italian models; of all the poets of the age, he is the one who is the closest in sensibility to St. Theresa herself. Donne enters into his mind, the Italians into his language, but St. Theresa enters into and takes possession of his heart as she could not possess his more frigid Italian prototypes. The sensationalism which seems deliberate in Marino seems spontaneous in Crashaw. But as with Donne the thought is split up into thoughts, each inspected and tasted, so with Crashaw the emotion is split up into emotions; instead of one emotion informing the whole poem, you have emotion piled on emotion, as a man drinks when he is afraid of becoming sober. There is the same constant diversion and dispersion as in Donne; thought, which I have called thoughts, and which you see I shall shortly call wit, is called upon to stimulate, to over-stimulate feeling, lest it should flag.

Before proceeding to the more important poems of Crashaw, let us compare one verse of his paraphrase of the *Vexilla Regis* with the original hymn of Fortunatus. This translating and adorning of hymns and psalms was a frequent pastime of the epoch.

Vexilla regis prodeunt,
Fulget crucis mysterium
Quo carne carnis conditor
Suspensus est patibulo. . . .[25]

This is not, I think, one of the finest hymns of the Church, and there is a suspicion of wit in the line "carne carnis conditor," but see what Crashaw makes of it:

Look up, languishing Soul! Lo where the fair
BADG of thy faith calls back thy care,
And biddes thee ne're forget
Thy life is one long Debt
Of love to Him, who on this painful TREE
Paid back the flesh he took for thee.[26]

Observe the ad hominem exhortation to the "languishing soul" (in Crashaw's time souls readily languished and swooned, as Theresa literally

did), the introduction of the distracting conceit of the debt and the repayment, the duty of "love" to the Creator, and the hortatory tone of a seventeenth-century sermon.

> Lo, how the streames of life, from that full nest
> Of loves, thy lord's too liberall brest,
> Flow in an amorous floud
> Of WATER wedding BLOOD,
> With these he wash't thy stain, transfer'd thy smart,
> And took it home to his own heart.[27]

Observe the "nest of loves," the "amorous flood," the wedding of water and blood, the personal relationship of the Lord and the devotee. And observe the tendency to a sequence of emotions, each in a separate image, rather than to any structure of emotion. For it is the tendency of sensationalism to follow up one impression by another, rather than to build one into another; it leads us to William James's *Radical Empiricism*.[28]

This inclination to make a poem a string of pearls, a garden of beauties pressed together without design, is very marked in the continental Jesuit poetry of the period, and has been well discussed by Signor Praz, in a most interesting passage in which he shows the predilection of these versifiers for the Greek Anthology.[29] A poem was often no more than a string of little poems or epigrams, each containing some striking figure of speech. Two poems of Crashaw, one very bad, one much better, and both, in the *seicento* manner, beautiful, illustrate this: I mean "The Tear" and "The Weeper."[30] The secretion of the lachrymal glands, I may observe, was a function which fascinated not only Crashaw, but his continental contemporaries; and to psychologists who might be interested in recurrent poetic symbols, I suggest the study of this seventeenth-century phenomenon.

Of the two poems, I prefer to examine "The Tear" in detail; for though it is less disconnected than the other, it is more grotesque and more hideous, and therefore if we can at the same time realise that it is also in its way beautiful, we shall accomplish something like a triumph of understanding, and shall have gone a long way toward comprehending the taste and temper of the seventeenth century. The tear in question is shining in the eye of the Virgin Mary (for I believe this poem to concern Her and not the Magdalen, who is the subject of the "Weeper"). The eight stanzas are eight several fancies concerning this tear.

What bright soft thing is this
Sweet *Mary* thy faire eyes expence?
A moist sparke it is,
A watry Diamond; from whence
The very terme I thinke was found,
The water of a Diamond.

"Soft thing" is good, for a tear; but "moist spark" is better, an excellent pass of pate;[31] "the water of a diamond" is good wit.

O 'tis not a teare,
'Tis a star about to drop
From thine eye its spheare,
The Sun will stoop and take it up,
Proud will his Sister be to weare
This thine eyes Jewell in her eare.

Next, "O 'tis a teare" we are told, and this is proved satisfactorily. So we proceed, if procession it be, to stanza 6;

Faire drop, why quak'st thou so?
Cause thou streight must lay thy head
In the dust? O no,
The dust shall never be thy bed;
A pillow for thee will I bring,
Stuft with downe of Angels wing.[32]

This is going Donne one better. Donne, you remember, supplied a bank as pillow for the drooping head of a violet; but Crashaw supplies a pillow, stuffed with down, and down from moulting angels at that, a pillow for the head – of a tear. One cannot conceive the state of mind of a writer who could pen such monstrosities. The only way is to repeat the stanza to oneself until its odd beauty comes out, like a palimpsest – for, I repeat, it has beauty. And the effect, I believe, is not merely on the ear. There is, I am sure, not only some amount of intellectual labour performed in preparing such a freak as this imagery is, but there is a certain intellectual ingredient in the enjoyment. It is as if you destroyed the natural connections between sense and thought, and built up some quite arbitrary connection out of the fragments. Note the resemblances and differences between this type of poetry and that of Shelley and Swinburne. The resemblance between at

least three poems of Crashaw – "The Tear," "The Weeper," and "The Supposed Mistress" (it is right that Crashaw's only poem of earthly love should be to a supposed mistress)[33] – and Shelley's "Skylark" is obvious and has been often noted. "The Skylark" is a succession of disconnected images, epigrams, of an iridescent and opulent beauty, which will not bear looking at too closely. Even the melody is reminiscent of Crashaw:

> The deaw no more will weep
> The prim roses' pale cheek to deck;
> The deaw no more will sleep
> Nuzzle'd in the lilly's neck . . .[34]

or

> Golden though he be,
> Golden Tagus murmures tho;
> Were his way by thee,
> Content & quiet he would goe.
> So much more rich would he esteem
> Thy sylver, then his golden stream.[35]

What is the difference between these lines of Crashaw's "Weeper," and

> Sound of vernal showers
> On the twinkling grass,
> Rain-awaken'd flowers –
> All that ever was
> Joyous and clear and fresh – thy music doth surpass.[36]

or

> The world's great age begins anew,
> The golden years return,
> The earth doth like a snake renew
> Its winter weeds outworn.[37]

or

> Violets that plead for pardon
> Or pine for fright[38]

or

That noise is of Time,
As his feathers are spread
And his feet set to climb
Through the boughs overhead,
And my foliage rings round him and rustles,
and branches are bent with his tread,[39]

I pass over the general differences due to two hundred years of thought and faith and doubt and invention; I would proceed from the more minute differences. The imagery of Donne, of Marvell, of Crashaw, of Marino is often perverse; it is always deliberate. Meanings are twisted, likenesses are forced, but always to produce a deliberate pleasure; it is a distinct sensation to try to imagine supporting the head of a tear on a pillow made of angels' down. But the imagery of Shelley and Swinburne is merely careless. They lack that wit of the seventeenth century, which is a deliberate method of stimulating the mind. The *trecento* had an exact statement of intellectual order; the *seicento* had an exact statement of intellectual disorder; Shelley and Swinburne had a vague statement of intellectual disorder. When I assert that neither Shelley's nor Swinburne's verse will bear close examination, I do not imply that they were fools. Both were learned; Shelley had a sort of philosophy; even Swinburne must have thought more often than he gets credit for; his "Hertha," from which I quoted, bears signs of a hasty reading of Emerson.[40] But their minds were like clocks hurriedly put together by the hand of a child; there is no real intimacy between the thought and the feeling in their verse. Read *Epipsychidion* and you go off into a reverie;[41] read "The Anatomy of the World," and your mind is continuously exercised. And this is perhaps a clue to the comparative crudity of the verbal music of Shelley and Swinburne. It is hardly too much to say that after the Caroline period, English versification, with the exception of one or two forms perfected during the eighteenth century, steadily deteriorates. Some of the verse of Tennyson shows immense technical skill, is better than anything of Shelley or Swinburne. I cite Tennyson's consummate skill to show that it is not merely a question of the slipshod, or of a degeneration of the ear. It is something deeper than that. It is a further stage in the disintegration of the intellect, the further separation of sound, image and thought. The revivification of the technique of French verse in the nineteenth century came from Baudelaire, a man of distinctly metaphysical mind. The seventeenth century dissociated the intellect and dissociated the emotions;

the dissociation of sound and sense in verse came later; the sort of reassociation that was effected, in English verse, was inorganic, and resulted in the crudity of versification of which I speak. Read Swinburne's "Hertha," or Arnold's "Scholar Gypsy" before you pass judgment on this theory.[42]

If my theory is right, then it is incorrect to accuse Marino or his chief contemporaries of vapidity. I am no authority on the Italian poetry of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and it is anything but congenial to my taste; but I have arrived at finding a peculiar beauty in his poetry. Take a poem like his "La Maddalena ai piedi di Cristo," a subject akin to those of Crashaw, and treated in the same way, in a series of disconnected conceits. There is everywhere a kind of exercise for the mind, which gives a beauty to the language and a firmness to the verse.

Dalla testa e da' lumi
e di chiome e di lagrime confonde,
sparse in lucide stille e 'n tepid'onde,
costei, torrenti e fiumi,
Oh ricchezza, oh tesoro!
Due piogge; una d'argento e l'altra d'oro.

In convito pomposo
offerse Cleopatra al fido amante
di perle in vasel d'oro
cibo insieme e tesoro;
ed or la tua fedel, caro amoroso,
in questa ricca mensa, a le tue piante,
mira, deh, mira come
offre in lagrime perle ed oro in chiome![43]

To a modern mind this ingenious reference to Cleopatra in a poem to St. Mary Magdalen (which is also decorated with the Vulgate text of the episode) might seem inappropriate, but not so to a seventeenth-century mind.[44] These Italian poets could write beautifully and in similar terms of Venus and the Virgin. Marino, like Crashaw, luxuriates in amorous fervour in his religious verse. Mary Magdalen *innamorò gli angeli e Dio* – made God and the angels fall in love with her; she was *amata amante* of Christ; it sounds very unlike the *primo amore* of Dante.[45] And gold, pearls, marble and alabaster abound in the most opulent baroque style.

I am not presenting Marino as a supersubtle Italian who led the simple Englishman Crashaw astray; in extravagance of conceit, as well as in intensity of somewhat morbid feeling, the Englishman could give him a large handicap. There may be in Marino, but I have never come across it, some conceit as astounding as that of the pillow for the head of the tear. And Signor Praz, who gives many interesting examples of *concetti* from Marino, Guarini[46] and the Latin Jesuits, agrees that Crashaw is more baroque than the baroque, more *seicento* than the *seicentisti*.[47] Had he lived today he could only have dwelt in Florence or in Rome.

The two most remarkable poems of Crashaw are undoubtedly those to St. Theresa, "To the Name and Honour" and "To the Book and Picture" (it was in the humour of the time to write poems to pictures and statuary).

> Love, thou art absolute, sole Lord
> Of life and death.[48]

A movement which is new and original in the history of octosyllabic rhythm.

> To prove the word
> We'll now appeal to none of all
> Those thy old soldiers, great and tall,
> Ripe men of martyrdom, that could reach down
> With strong arms their triumphant crown:
> Such as could with lusty breath
> Speak loud, unto the face of death,
> Their great Lord's glorious name; to none
> Of those whose spacious bosoms spread a throne
> For love at large to fill. Spare blood and sweat:
> We'll see Him take a private seat,
> And make His mansion in the mild
> And milky soul of a soft child.[49]

The rhythm is wholly Crashaw's own, in an age which handled this verse form better, and with greater variety, than it has ever been handled before or since; it is as different, technically, from the couplet of Marvell or King as it is from that of Swift – another master of this form in a later time. The language is simple and the vocabulary unaffected, far less "artificial" than that of Gray and Collins; and it is not easy reading. You have to move slowly with it and ponder it out; you cannot race through it as you not only

can, but must, race through Swinburne even at his best. But the most amazing passage is that from the "Book and Picture" which must have been written at another hour and at a greater intensity than the rest of the poem, and which is given by itself in *The Oxford Book of English Verse*.

O thou undaunted daughter of desires!
By all thy dower of lights and fires;
By all the eagle in thee, all the dove;
By all thy lives and deaths of love;
By thy large draughts of intellectual day,
And by thy thirsts of love more large than they;
By all thy brim-fill'd bowls of fierce desire,
By thy last morning's draught of liquid fire;
By the full kingdom of that final kiss
That seized thy parting soul, and seal'd thee His;
By all the Heav'n thou has in Him
(Fair sister of the seraphim!);
By all of Him we have in thee;
Leave nothing of myself in me.
Let me so read thy life, that I
Unto all life of mine may die![50]

I should not like to quote anything more of Crashaw, or any kindred verse, after quoting this. A little acquaintance with the English and Italian verse of the period enables us to recognise several stock conceits, the lights and fires, lives and deaths and thirsts; but they are fused beyond analysis and perfected beyond criticism. This is the ultimate literary expression of the religious feeling of that strange period of sensual religious intensity.

We have now arrived at the point where we ought to be able to determine the difference between the conceit of Donne and the conceit of Crashaw, between the metaphysicality of Donne and the metaphysicality of Crashaw. In Donne, the conceit in its most characteristic form, as the lovers and the pair of compasses, is the extravagant development of a simile or a metaphor to emphasise an idea; the focus is transferred from the original idea to the pleasure in the exactness with which the simile or metaphor can be carried out in detail. The image is usually original and is usually or often drawn from the peculiar stores of learning that Donne possessed. Cleveland, for instance, in the verses which I quoted

Why doth my she-advowson fly
Incumbency?[51]

was directly under the influence of Donne. Such imagery, I dare say, would have seemed barbarous and pedantic to the Italians and Italianates, and also to Góngora,[52] whom I have not mentioned, because I do not know Spanish well enough to read such a difficult poet fluently, and because for English poetry the influence of Gongorism seems to me much less than that of Marinism.[53*] With Crashaw, as with Marino, the imagery is limited and conventional, as the intellectual interests are much narrower. What is in Donne a kind of vagrancy of thought becomes in Crashaw almost a perversity of feeling. The conceit of Crashaw is briefer, the shocks and surprises more violent and more frequent, almost rhythmically regular. The intellectual effort is limited in its scope and is concentrated into a legerdemain, into epigram. Donne gives the impression of rambling because it pleases him spontaneously; Crashaw the impression of moving in a deliberate pattern. Crashaw is much more artificial, if the word "artificiality" be not misleading. With Donne the disintegration of thought produces the conceit, but the conceit springs from original thought; with Crashaw the disintegration of thought has, with the assistance of Italian models, become almost an aesthetic; Donne thought, whether he fabricated conceits or no; Crashaw thought in and for the conceit. And the conceit could be carried no further.

Crashaw was influenced by Donne as well as by the Italians; some of the other poets were also influenced by both. Marvell, for instance, in his more conceited verse, resorts to both. When he speaks of the fisherman who

like Antipodes in shoes
They shod their heads in their canoes,[54]

he is using a kind of conceit which Donne might have used, but would have used at greater length. Where Donne tends to expand, the others tend to contract. But when Marvell speaks of

Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade[55]

he is employing a conceit that passes the bounds of simile or metaphor, and becomes a wholly arbitrary yoking of the dissimilar; and when he says

the brotherless Heliades
Melt in such amber tears as these[56]

he is wholly in the aesthetic of Crashaw and the Italians.

This aesthetic is an addiction to the pursuit of "beauty" of a luxuriant sort, without intellectual scruple, but never without an enjoyment from the torturing of the intellect. But it is not on the grounds of his use of the conceit that I class Crashaw as a metaphysical poet. If that were so, I should have to admit Marino, Guarini, Góngora and the rest as metaphysical also. The conceit is apt for the expression of the metaphysicality of the seventeenth century, but concettism and metaphysicality are not identical. It is because Crashaw is definitely, and far more than George Herbert, or Traherne, or Vaughan, one of those who have definitely brought a part of what belongs ordinarily to the sphere of thought within the sphere of feeling. That the result is far less a triumph for the human spirit than the work of the group of Dante, that the result is suspect in its nature and dangerous, that it is a substitution of human feelings rather than an extension of them, is another matter. In Dante, as I have said again and again, you get a system of thought and feeling; every part of the system felt and thought in its place, and the whole system felt and thought; and you cannot say that it is primarily "intellectual" or primarily "emotional," for the thought and the emotion are reverse sides of the same thing. In Donne you get a sequence of thoughts which are felt; in Crashaw you might say, by slightly straining an antithesis, that you have a sequence of feelings which are thought. In neither do you find a perfect balance.

It remains now to study the last transformation before the poetry of metaphysic disappears: in a man who was mediocre in both thought and feeling, compared to either Donne or Crashaw; yet who in some respects had an individuality more marked than that of any of the minor poets whom we have not discussed, and who therefore makes an excellent specimen: Abraham Cowley.[57] And with Cowley this enigmatic seventeenth century of the first Charles fades into the modern intelligibility of Dryden, Swift, Pope, Gay and Bolingbroke,[58] whose mental and emotional structure, I imagine, was very much like our own.

NOTES

1. This is TSE's first mention of his intention to write "The School of Donne," and of his initial conception of the model and scope of the study. He wrote that Praz's *Secentismo e marinismo in Inghilterra* "suggests that there is ample material, for some patient Sainte-Beuve,

for an extensive *Port-Royal* of English literature" (597); later in 1926, in "Hooker, Hobbes, and Others" he declared: "It has become more and more manifest of late that the seventeenth century is a period of capital importance and that there are a number of companion works to Sainte Beuve's *Port-Royal* to be written" (849).

2. TSE follows convention in giving Donne's birth date as 1573 (as in DNB), but it has since been established that he was born between 24 Jan and 19 June 1572 (ODNB). The precise date of Crashaw's birth, usually given as 1613, is still unknown, but it was toward the end of 1612 or early in 1613 (ODNB).

3. Crashaw, whose ordination records were destroyed, took a curacy in the Anglican Church in 1639 and was received into the Catholic Church in 1645.

4. Crashaw's mother, Helen, daughter of John Routh, died in his infancy; his stepmother, Elizabeth Skinner, who was eulogized for her affection to him, died in childbirth in 1620 when he was seven years old.

5. The vision is described in Chapter XXXVIII, para. 1 of *The Life of St. Teresa of Jesus*, trans. David Lewis (London: St Anselm's Society, 1888): "I remained there but a few moments thus, when I was rapt in spirit with such violence that I could make no resistance whatever. It seemed to me that I was taken up to heaven; and the first persons I saw there were my father and my mother. I saw other things also; but the time was no longer than that in which the *Ave Maria* might be said, and I was amazed at it, looking on it all as too great a grace for me" (324).

6. William Crashaw (1572-1626), a rigorous Puritan clergyman educated at Cambridge, had gathered a large library of 500 manuscripts and 3,000 printed books, many of them acquired as an adversarial reader of Catholic, specifically Jesuit, literature. Motivated by a desire to denounce the Pope and expose Jesuit heresies, he published such anti-Catholic pamphlets as *The Jesuites Gospel* (1610).

7. See Lecture II (632).

8. *Hamlet* I.v.174-75: "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, / Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

9. Archbishop of Canterbury William Laud was the leader of the High Anglican party and a vigorous opponent of Puritan influences and demands for liturgical changes in the Church of England. In his "The Answer . . . to the Speech of the Lord Say and Seal, Touching the Liturgy," Laud argues that in Psalm CX of *The Book of Common Prayer* "the people are said 'to offer their freewill offerings with an holy worship,' or 'in the beauties of holiness:' and though, perhaps, his Lordship will not allow of this translation, yet so far he may as to see the use of the phrase. And 'in the beauties of holiness,' (which keeps close to the original,) will please him less; since a barn with them is as good as a church." *Works*, VI (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1857), 107.

10. In 1635, Crashaw was elected to a Fellowship at Peterhouse, the Cambridge center of the Laudian High Church, and in a poem of that year ("On a Treatise of Charity") he denounced those who identified the Pope with Antichrist and those who attacked the papacy as "a point of Faith." In Dec 1643, following the outbreak of the Civil War, the chapel at Peterhouse was desecrated by the Parliamentary Commissioners, who forced the Fellows to take the Solemn League and Covenant. Crashaw refused the oath, was expelled, left England, and joined the Roman Church.

11. Mary Collett (1601-80) was the eldest daughter of John Collett, whose large family made up the greatest part of the small devotional community established in 1626 by his brother-in-

law, Nicholas Ferrar. When Crashaw began to visit Little Gidding in 1632 at the age of nineteen, the versatile Mary had become "The Mother" of the community and was to become, in effect, the spiritual mother of Crashaw.

12. TSE alludes to Cacciaguida's prophecy of Dante's exile in *Paradiso* XVII (58-60): "Thou shalt make trial of how salt doth taste another's bread, and how hard the path to descend and mount upon another's stair." TSE misremembers "gente" [people] for "compagnia" [company] in line 62, "la compagnia malvagia e scempia" ["the vicious and ill company"], which Cacciaguida warns shall weigh upon Dante's shoulders most heavily (*DC3* 212-13). When Crashaw, an attendant to Cardinal Palotta in Rome, complained to him of the wickedness of those in his service, the Italian followers so turned upon Crashaw that the Cardinal had to dismiss him to save his life. In Apr 1649 he was appointed subcanon of the church of Our Lady of Loreto, and he was buried in Loreto after his death in Aug of that year.

13. Walter Pater's *Marius the Epicurean* (1885) is set in second-century Rome and traces Marius's successive encounters with Paganism, Epicureanism, Stoicism and finally Christianity. TSE inscribed his personal copy (New York: Macmillan, 1906), "I had this copy, and read it, when I was at Milton in 1906." In "Arnold and Pater" (1930) TSE later called the novel "incoherent" and remarked that Marius "merely *drifts* towards the Christian Church, if he can be said to have any motion at all . . . To the end, Marius remains only a half-awakened soul" (*SE* 440-42).

14. The first English translation of Saint Teresa of Ávila's *Libro de la vida* (1588) was published as *The Life of Mother Teresa of Jesus* by "W. M." (likely the Irish Jesuit, William Malone) in 1611.

15. TSE recalls the vision described in Chapter XXIX, para. 8 of *The Life of St. Theresa of Jesus*, where the returned crucifix is not adorned with pearls but made of supernatural stones: "On one occasion, when I was holding in my hand the cross of my rosary, He took it from me into His own hand. He returned it; but it was then four large stones incomparably more precious than diamonds; for nothing can be compared with what is supernatural. Diamonds seem counterfeits and imperfect when compared with these precious stones. The five wounds were delineated on them with most admirable art. He said to me, that for the future that cross would appear so to me always; and so it did. I never saw the wood of which it was made, but only the precious stones. They were seen, however, by no one else, – only by myself" (231).

16. In his two chapters on St. Theresa in *Études d'histoire et de psychologie du mysticisme. Les Grands Mystiques chrétiens* [Studies of the History and Psychology of Mysticism: The Great Christian Mystics] (1908), Henri Delacroix traces the succession of mystical states in St. Theresa's writings and provides a psychological analysis based on the material. TSE read and took notes on the volume while a student at Harvard (Houghton). In *Psychologie des mystiques catholiques orthodoxes* [Psychology of the Orthodox Catholic Mystics] (1920), Maxime Brenier de Montmorand (b. 1860) uses specific theories (James-Lange, Krafft-Ebing, Nordau, Leuba, Myers, James, Delacroix) to analyze the psychological and pathological nature of St. Theresa's mystical sensibility.

17†. TSE originally wrote *Paradiso* but corrected the mistake when revising this paragraph for the Turnbull Lectures (1933).

18. *Purgatorio* XXX.48; *trans*: "I recognise the tokens of the ancient flame" (*DC2* 380-81). *Read*: "conosco i segni dell'antica fiamma." TSE's misquotation may conflate Dante's line with the line from Virgil's *Aeneid* (IV.23) of which it is a translation: "Agnosco veteris

vestigia flammae." His edition glosses this line with a reference to the passage from Virgil (*DC2* 388).

19. TSE translates from *Secentismo e marinismo in Inghilterra*: "La general tendenza dell'epoca è di rendere le passioni divine uno specchio fedele delle passioni umane" (148).

20. Prudentius, the fourth-century convert who became known as the first poet of the Christian Church, was the author of the *Liber cathemerinon*, "Hymns for the day," in which he drew on Old and New Testament stories. TSE had written parenthetically to Richard Aldington on 17 Nov 1921, after criticizing H.D.'s poetry for a limp Hellenism and "a neurotic carnality": "(I imagine you dislike equally the Prudentianism of myself and Mr. Joyce)" (*L1* 606). St. Thomas Aquinas's four hymns in celebration of the Eucharist, including the *Lauda Sion Salvatorem*, were written for the Mass and Office of his "Feast of Corpus Christi" (1264).

21. In 1559, a year after Elizabeth I took the throne, Parliament enacted legislation (the Supremacy Act and the Act of Uniformity) that effected the Elizabethan Settlement, or *via media*, which placed the English Church on broad middle ground between extreme Catholics on the right and extreme Protestants on the left. Herbert, a devout Anglican and a moderate opponent of the Puritans and Calvinists, took orders in the Church of England, and the devotional poems in *The Temple* (1633) are often thought to represent the *via media* of the Church in his time. In "John Bramhall" (1927), TSE later wrote: "the *via media* is of all ways the most difficult to follow. It requires discipline and self-control, it requires both imagination and hold on reality"(*SE* 359).

22. The opening lines of Henry Vaughan's "The World" (1650); *read*: "I saw Eternity the other night / Like a great Ring of pure and endless light."

23. *Paradiso* XXXIII.90-92. *Trans*: "The universal form of this complex I think that I beheld . . . what I tell of is one simple flame" (*DC3* 404-05). TSE reverses the sequence of these lines; *read*: "che ciò chi'io dico è un semplice lume. / La forma universal di questo nodo / credo ch'io vidi."

24. TSE wrote at greater length on Vaughan in his review of Edmund Blunden's *On the Poems of Henry Vaughan* (1927), where he re-examines the observation that "Vaughan is usually considered as the poet of occasional fine lines, and of no perfect poem." "The Silurist," *The Dial*, 83 (Sept 1927), 261.

25. *Trans*: "The Royal Banners forward go; / The Cross shines forth in mystic glow; / Where he in flesh, our flesh who made, / Our sentence bore, our ransom paid." Trans. Dr. John Mason Neale, *The Seven Great Hymns of the Mediaeval Church* (New York: Anson Randolph, 1865), 111. Fortunatus (d. ca. 600) lived in Ravenna before being driven to France by the Lombards. He became Bishop of Poitiers and composed the *Vexilla regis* (ca. 569) for the consecration of a church in Poitiers, though the hymn was later expanded by two stanzas and sung during Vespers at Passiontide. Crashaw's version, "Vexilla Regis," first published in *Steps to the Temple* (1648), was expanded as "Vexilla Regis, the Hymn of the Holy Crosse" in *Carmen Deo nostro* (1652).

26. The opening lines of "Vexilla Regis, the Hymn of the Holy Crosse." On 12 Feb 1926, TSE had asked the London Library to send him "The best possible edition of Crashaw's Poems"; he used A. R. Waller's Cambridge English Classics edition of Crashaw's *Poems* (1904), which he later criticized in his review ("A Note on Richard Crashaw") of L. C. Martin's edition of *The Poems English Latin and Greek of Richard Crashaw* (1927).

27. "Vexilla Regis," stanza II. *Poems*, 231.

28. Building on earlier empiricist philosophies that all knowledge is ultimately derived from disparate impressions of sensations and reflections, James asserted in his *Essays in Radical Empiricism* (London: Longmans, Green, 1912) that knowledge derives from the conjunctive relations of "pure experience," the name he gives to "the instant field of the present," "the immediate flux of life which furnishes the material to our late reflection with its conceptual categories" (23, 93). TSE drew upon the work in the first chapter of his dissertation for a discussion of immediate experience and its object (1.243).

29. See *Secentismo e marinismo in Inghilterra*, 221-23, and 225-34, where Praz quotes from a number of Jesuit poets and directs the reader to *Parnassus Societatis Iesu* (1654) for a comprehensive collection of Jesuit poetry in Latin (222n). *The Greek Anthology*: a collection of more than 4,000 pagan and Christian epigrams from 700 BC to AD 900. TSE was familiar with W. R. Paton's five-volume edition in the Loeb Classical Library (1916) and with J. W. Mackail's selected edition (1906).

30. "The Teare" and "Sainte Mary Magdalene; or, The Weeper" first appeared in *Steps to the Temple* (1646).

31. An allusion to Stephano's description of Trinculo's sally of wit in *The Tempest* IV.i.243-45: "Wit shall not go unrewarded while I am King of this country. 'Steal by line and level' is an excellent pass of pate – there's another garment for 't."

32. "The Teare," stanzas 1, 2, and 6 (*Poems*, 71-72).

33. "Wishes. To his (Supposed) Mistresse" appeared in *The Delights of the Muses* (1648).

34. "The Weeper," stanza VIII, ll. 1-4 (*Poems*, 260).

35. "The Weeper," stanza XIII. In "The Devotional Poets of the Seventeenth Century" (1930), TSE later selected these two stanzas again for comparison with Shelley's "To a Skylark": "If you read the whole poem ['The Weeper'] through, it must remind you of Shelley's 'Skylark,' in its melody, and apparently in its succession of images. But if you look at the 'Skylark' you will see that Shelley's images are a straight succession of plain similes, with none of the delight in intellectual ingenuity . . . which, when combined with emotional intensity, gives the peculiar character of this poetry of the first half of the seventeenth century." *The Listener*, 3 (26 Mar 1930), 553.

36. "To a Skylark" (1820), ll. 56-60, as printed in TSE's copy of *The Oxford Book of English Verse 1250-1900,* ed. Arthur Quiller-Couch (Oxford: Clarendon, 1900), 704. In "A Note on Richard Crashaw" (1927) TSE intensified his comparative discussion of Crashaw and Shelley: "I have found that the more I studied the meaning of Crashaw's verse, and his peculiar use of image and conceit, the less resemblance the music of it seemed to have to Shelley's. . . . Crashaw's images, even when entirely preposterous . . . give a kind of intellectual pleasure. . . . There is brain work in it. But in "The Skylark" there is no brain work. For the first time perhaps in verse of such eminence, sound exists without sense" (*FLA* 122-23).

37. Shelley, *Hellas* (1822), from the Chorus, ll. 1060-63, printed separately in *The Oxford Book of English Verse*, 701; *read*: "Her winter weeds outworn." TSE had quoted the lines correctly for his commentary in "John Dryden" (1921): "It is not so easy to see propriety in an image which divests a snake of 'winter weeds'; and this is a sort of blemish which would have been noticed more quickly by a contemporary of Dryden than by a contemporary of Shelley" (351).

38. From Swinburne's "Before the Mirror," ll. 3-4 from *Poems and Ballads* (1865); *read*: "Snowdrops that plead for pardon / And pine for fright." TSE had quoted the lines correctly in "Swinburne as Poet," where he argued that Swinburne is less interested in objects than he is in

words and in the "vague associations of idea that the words give him" (183). Here he likely misremembers "The violets" from Donne's "The Extasie," which he had discussed in detail in his third lecture (655-56).

39. Swinburne, "Hertha," ll. 116-20, from *Songs before Sunrise* (1871).

40. In Swinburne's poem, the ancient Teutonic earth-goddess Hertha announces herself as the embodiment of the human over-soul: "Out of me God and man; / I am equal and Whole; / God changes, and man, and the form of / them bodily; I am the soul." The poem is indebted to Emerson's "The Over-Soul" (1841).

41. Shelley's *Epipsychidion* was published in 1821.

42. Arnold's "The Scholar-Gipsy" appeared in *Poems* (1853).

43. *Trans*: "From the head and from the eyes / she mingles flowing hair and tears, / scattered in glistening drops and in tepid waves. / She, streams and rivers, / Oh richness, oh treasure! / Two rainfalls: one of silver and the other of gold. / / At a sumptuous banquet / Cleopatra offered her faithful lover / some pearls in a golden vessel, / food as well as treasure, / And now your faithful one, dear lover, / at this rich banquet, at your feet, / look, ah, look how / with her tears offers pearls, with her hair, gold!" The sixth and seventh stanzas of Giambattista Marino's "La Maddalena ai piedi di Cristo" [Magdalene at the Feet of Christ] from *La lira* (1614), in *Poesie varie*, ed. Benedetto Croce (Bari: Laterza, 1913), 371, borrowed from the London Library.

44. The above stanzas are prefaced by a Latin extract from the Vulgate text of Luke 7:38: "Lachrymis coepit rigare pedes eius et capillis capitis sui tergebat." *Trans*: "[she] began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head" (King James). In "Dante" (1929) TSE contrasts the clarity of Dante's "power of association" and "that of Marino speaking in one breath of the beauty of the Magdalen and the opulence of Cleopatra (so that you are not quite sure what adjectives apply to which)" (*SE* 268).

45. From Marino's "Maddalena, di Tiziano" [The Magdalene, of Titian] (1620), ll. 104, 8; in *Poesie varie*, 245, 242. TSE contrasts Marino's portrait of Magdalene as Christ's "amata amante" [beloved lover] with Dante's representations of divine love in the *Commedia*, where "primo Amore" [Primal Love] first appears over the Gates of Hell in *Inferno* III.7, and subsequently in *Paradiso* XXVI.38, and XXXII.142. TSE later clarified the distinction in "A Note on Richard Crashaw" (1928): "Dante . . . always seems perfectly aware of every shade of both human and divine love . . . there is never any danger of his confounding the two loves" (*FLA* 125).

46. Giovanni Battista Guarini (1538-1612) is known for his pastoral tragicomedy, *Il pastor fido* [The Faithful Shepherd] (ca. 1591), which foreshadowed the beginning of baroque poetry in Italy. In a lengthy note (109-11n), Praz demonstrates the similarity of conceits in some of Donne's poems to those in Guarini's madrigals and sonnets, including the simile of the compasses in Donne's "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning," also found in one of Guarini's madrigals.

47. In his discussion of the baroque qualities in Crashaw's "Bulla" and "Musicks Duell," Praz declares: "In these bold attempts at surpassing the limits and possibilities of his own art, Crashaw, better than any of the poets who were his contemporaries, achieves a result which may be said to have been the common aspiration of baroque art." *The Flaming Heart*, 251; originally in *Secentismo e marinismo in Inghilterra*, 269.

48. The opening lines of "A Hymn to the Name and Honour of the Admirable Saint Teresa" (1646, 1648); for the first time in this lecture, TSE takes his text not from Waller's edition of *Poems* but from a modernized version in *The Oxford Book of English Verse*, 362.

49. "A Hymn to the Name and Honour of the Admirable Saint Teresa," ll. 2-14. *Oxford Book of English Verse*, 362.

50. From "The Flaming Heart, upon the Book and Picture of the Seraphical Saint Teresa" (ll. 93-108); these lines comprise the last sixteen of twenty-four new lines added to the poem after the first version was published in 1648; as printed in an excerpt included in *The Oxford Book of English Verse*, 367.

51. Cleveland, "To Julia to Expedite her Promise"; TSE quoted at greater length from the poem in his fourth Clark lecture (681).

52. The Spanish poet and priest Luis de Góngora y Argote (1561-1627) developed an extravagantly conceited style under the influence of a young soldier-poet, Luis de Carrillo y Sotomayor, who had himself been strongly influenced by Marino while serving in Italy. Góngora's verse remained unpublished until the year of his death, when it appeared as *Obras en verso del Homero español* [Works in Verse of the Spanish Homer]. TSE published E. M. Wilson's translation of lines from Góngora's *Las soledades* [Solitudes] (1614) in the *Criterion* of July 1930.

53*. TSE later inserted a holograph 'x' in black ink for a corresponding notation in the bottom margin: "cf. Fitzmaurice Kelly: Spanish Literature." James Fitzmaurice-Kelly (1858-1923), historian and critic of Spanish literature, observes in his *A History of Spanish Literature* (1898) that "Gongorism derives directly from the Marinism propagated in Spain by Carrillo, though it must be confessed that Marino's extravagances pale beside those of Gongora. . . . Marino's conceits were, so to say, almost natural to him, while Gongora's are a pure effect of affectation . . . It took Spain a hundred years to rid her veins of the Gongoristic poison, and Gongorism has now become, in Spain itself, a synonym for all that is bad in literature" (London: Appleton, 1918), 285, 292.

54. From the final stanza (ll. 771-72) of "Upon Appleton House"; *read*: "Have shod their heads in their canoes." From TSE's Muses' Library edition of *The Poems of Andrew Marvell* (London: Routledge, 1898): TSE had quoted these lines correctly in "Andrew Marvell" (1921) as an example "of images which are over-developed or distracting; which support nothing but their own misshapen bodies" (313-14).

55. Marvell, "The Garden" (1681), ll. 47-48. *Poems*, 100.

56. Marvell, "The Nymph Complaining for the Death of her Fawn," ll. 99-100; TSE's emphasis. *Poems*, 52.

57. On 15 Feb 1926 TSE wrote to the London Library to request the following books for Lecture VII:

1. Abraham Cowley – Complete Poems.
2. Abraham Cowley – Letters
   both in the Oxford Editions if possible,
3. The best Life of Cowley (if any).
4. The Poems of Waller.
5. The Poems of Denham.
6. The Poems of Oldham.

58. The poet and dramatist John Gay (1685-1732), a friend of Pope, is best known for *The Beggar's Opera* (1728) and two volumes of verse, *Fables* (1727, 1738). The five-volume edition of *The Works* of Henry St. John Bolingbroke, a friend of Pope, was published in 1754.

Lecture VII

Cowley and the Transition

Donne was born in 1573; Crashaw in 1612; Cowley in 1618. The difference of a literary generation between Donne and Crashaw is indicated by the years; but the years do not indicate the difference that there is between Crashaw and Cowley. Crashaw is Caroline of the first Charles; Cowley is Caroline of the Exile – for indeed he is antiquated in the Restoration.[1] I know of no figure at once so mediocre and so important as Cowley. For in much of his work he is the most faithful disciple and mimic of Donne; and on the other side he is the prototype of the man of letters of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. We have seen that Donne by his greatness, Crashaw by his catholicity of culture, become symbols of the origin of modern Europe; Cowley is a symbol of the change from seventeenth- to eighteenth-century England. With Cowley, all problems are reduced in size and artificially simplified. One illustration to begin with will show the difference of proportion. In the mind of Donne we find all the ideas of his time co-existent in their most abstract form; that is to say, we find in Donne the emotional co-efficients of the most general ideas. Some of these ideas are of contemporary science, some of contemporary theology; but they are all entertained on an equal footing; and this is typical of his time. In the mind of Cowley, many of these ideas no longer find entrance; what are left are certainly more coherent and orderly, but are not believed by himself with the same intensity with which the ideas of Donne were entertained by himself. It is difficult to expound my meaning here, for the subject is really the subject for a book on The History of Belief. I suggest to psychologists that Belief alters from age to age, so that when a person asserts "I believe X," we must take into account the position in time of the author of the statement. The eighteenth century appears much more settled, orderly and positive and confident in some aspects than the seventeenth; but its belief is of a different, I think of an inferior quality to that of the thirteenth century. And mind you, I am not speaking of the object of belief, but of the believing itself.[2]

So Cowley, already Cowley, appears much more settled than Donne. It is that his mind, like the minds of greater men than he, Dryden, Pope, even

the colossal Swift, the greatest writer of English prose, and the greatest man who has ever written great English prose – his mind was restricted. With all the psychological differences that I have tried to indicate, between himself and Dante, Donne was still able to find the emotional equivalent of highly abstract or generalised ideas. Dryden, or Pope, or Swift, or any later man, is only able to find the equivalent, when he does find it, by reducing the idea. In Donne the essence of modern science was co-existent, in an entertained form, with the essence of theological science. Cowley kept his theology and science separate by dwarfing them both. He was a man of scientific tastes, and he had known the great Hobbes,[3] and men of science in Paris probably, and what was his science? Botany. He was an enthusiastic gardener.[4] He loved to formulate schemes for founding institutions for scientific research. He was almost as enthusiastic as Mr. H. G. Wells. His scheme for the foundations of a college of science was almost practical enough to be laid before any philanthropic capitalist today; according to this scheme, income and expenditure are equal, and the latter allows for "Four Old Women" to make the beds of the professors.[5] And he was, so far as I know, the first person to suggest the foundation of colleges for the teaching of agriculture as a science.[6†]

I have not touched upon these matters to make pleasant anecdotes, but to lead to the appreciation of the vast difference between the lyrics of Donne and the *Mistress* of Cowley.[7] It shows, I think, the essential place of Donne in an English tradition, the fact that this moderate and uninteresting man Cowley, who was himself to have so much influence, should have reverted to, and perpetuated, the influence of Donne. Especially considering his acquaintance with, and admiration for Crashaw, recognised in one of his finest poems.[8] Cowley is the link between Donne and Dryden. Let us see what of Donne is preserved in Cowley.

> This obligation to amorous ditties owes, I believe, its original to the fame of Petrarch, who, in an age rude and uncultivated, by his tuneful homage to his Laura, refined the manners of the lettered world, and filled Europe with love and poetry. But the basis of all excellence is truth: he that professes love ought to feel its power. Petrarch was a real lover, and Laura doubtless deserved his tenderness. Of Cowley, we are told by Barnes, who had means enough of information, that, whatever he may talk of his own inflammability, and the variety of characters by which his

> heart was divided, he in reality was in love but once, and then never had resolution to tell his passion.[9]

Without pausing to comment on the strange mixture of good sense, good phrasing, misinformation, ignorance and cheap journalism (e.g. the word "tuneful") so characteristic of Dr. Johnson, we may observe that the heart of another is a dark forest, and whatever Cowley felt is a mystery, for there is no evidence any way. It is certain that *The Mistress* does not exhibit Cowley's passions, whatever they were, with any ingenuousness. I choose first a specimen which is not included in Professor Grierson's collection:

> Now *by my Love*, the greatest *Oath* that is,
> None loves you half so well as I:
> I do not ask *your Love* for this;
> But for Heave'ns sake *believe me*, or I dye.
> No *Servant* e're but did deserve
> His *Master* should believe that he does serve;
> And I'll ask no more *wages*, though I *starve*.
>
> 'Tis no *luxurious Diet* this, and sure
> I shall not by't too *Lusty* prove;
> Yet shall it willingly endure,
> If 't can but keep together *Life* and *Love*.
> Being your *Priso'ner* and your *slave*,
> I do not *Feasts* and *Banquets* look to have,
> A little *Bread* and *Water*'s all I crave.
>
> O'n a *Sigh* of Pity I a year can live,
> One *Tear* will keep me twenty at least,
> Fifty a gentle *Look* will give;
> An hundred years on one *kind word* I'll feast:
> A thousand more will added be,
> If you an *Inclination* have for me;
> And all beyond is vast *Eternity*.[10]

One speculates whether Cowley had not read Marvell's "Coy Mistress," as well as Donne's "I wonder, by my troth. . . ."[11] and others. But observe the cleverness and the vapidity. There is no single line or image, even stanza, which might not have dignified a poem by Donne; he even imitates, as he

does elsewhere, the direct and emphatic beginning; every detail is faithfully reproduced, but the movement is completely absent. In Donne you get always an emotional continuity, a movement from the central to the peripheral, from feeling to thought, to the feeling of that thought, and so on; and in Donne even the diversion, the descents have a significance of feeling which sophisticates and complicates, without destroying, the original impulse. In Donne there is an emotional requirement of the conceit; in Marino, in Crashaw, there is an emotion in the conceit; with Cowley there is an effort to reconstitute that curious amalgam of thought and feeling through the conceit. Cowley is an inferior Petrarch; that Petrarch whom Johnson treats with the respect only given to a subject one knows nothing about and does not wish to take the trouble of looking into. Original movements of mind created the forms; you cannot by simulating the forms revive the mind.

I will quote one more specimen of Cowley's erotic verse to emphasise the difference; from a poem in which he endeavours to revive "The Extasie" of Donne:[12]

> Indeed I must confess,
> When *Souls* mix 'tis an *Happiness*;
> But not compleat till *Bodies* too combine,
> And closely as our minds together join;
> But half of Heaven the *Souls* in glory tast,
> 'Till by Love in Heaven at last,
> Their *Bodies* too are plac't.
>
> That *souls* do beauty know,
> 'Tis to the *Bodies* help they owe;
> If when they know't, they strait abuse that trust,
> And shut the *Body* from't, 'tis as unjust,
> As if I brought my dearest *Friend* to see
> My *Mistress*, and at th'instant *He*
> Should steal her quite from *Me*.

I have said that "The Extasie" of Donne compared to the *Vita Nuova* represents a decline of intellect and spirit; is there any need to point out the degradation from "The Extasie" to Cowley's "Platonick Love"?

You will perhaps think it unjust of me, when my opinion of Cowley is so low, to have singled him out at all, and only for contempt. But this is not by

any means the whole story; and if Cowley was a poor metaphysical, as we shall see, he was excellent in other ways. No one could mimic Donne so well and so badly without a power of appreciation. One of our telescopes for viewing the metaphysic mind – to use a conceit like his own – is this man whose own wit was at the large eyepiece.[13] Cowley had considerable critical ability, and his criticism, as well as his skill in phrase and versification, is shown in his ode on "Wit." As far as it goes, this ode is better criticism of Donne than anything written by Dryden or Pope or Johnson, who were all too remote in spirit to understand him, though not too remote to be descended from him. I have already observed in the first lecture, that Wit is not the same thing for Johnson as it was for Dryden;[14] it must now be added, that Wit was not the same thing for Dryden that it was for Cowley. I shall illustrate this assertion in the reverse of chronological order.

> Johnson:
> If by a more noble and more adequate conception, that be considered as wit which is at once natural and new, that which, though not obvious, is, upon its first production, acknowledged to be just; if it be that which he that never found it, wonders how he missed; to wit of this kind the metaphysical poets have seldom risen. Their thoughts are often new, but seldom natural; they are not obvious, but neither are they just; and the reader, far from wondering that he missed them, wonders more frequently by what perverseness of industry they were ever found.[15]

You will remark that for Johnson there is nothing organic about wit; wit is still serious, is not closely associated with "humour"; but it is not a spirit animating the whole, but in the dignifying and embellishing [of] a theme. In the loosest of Donne's compositions there is a kind of continuity in change, so that there is an effect of the whole poem which is not the effect of any of its parts. In Johnson's greatest poem, *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, as in eighteenth-century poetry at its best, there is much greater neatness and decorum, but neatness and decorum do not make order – though they require cleanliness. In the *Vanity of Human Wishes* there are plenty of intellectual variations on a main moral reflection; as notions, they are sufficiently arranged and distinguished. But the emotion is on the whole monotonous; it is applied with very little modulation to a succession of topics; and monotony is the total effect. That is why two or three couplets of Johnson's poem, or of Goldsmith's, suffice to represent the poem in our memory, in spite of the exquisite variation of the verse. He does not

succeed in constituting that unity of feeling, out of elements perhaps the most disparate and remote, which is perhaps the highest unity of all.[16]

Dryden had a greater power of cohering a diversity of feeling than Johnson, and a higher conception of wit.

> The composition of all poems is, or ought to be, of wit; and wit in the poet, or *Wit writing* (if you will give me leave to use a school distinction), is no other than the faculty of imagination in the writer, which, like a nimble spaniel, beats over and ranges through the field of memory, till it springs the quarry it hunted after; or, without metaphor, which searches over all the memory for the species or ideas of those things which it designs to represent. . . . The first happiness of the poet's imagination is properly invention, or finding of the thought; the second is fancy, or the variation, deriving, or moulding, of that thought, as the judgment represents it proper to the subject; the third is elocution, or the art of clothing and adorning that thought, so found and varied, in apt, significant, and sounding words; the quickness of the imagination is seen in the invention, the fertility in the fancy, and the accuracy in the expression.[17]

You will not fail to have noticed how much more masculine is the analysis, how much more clear and philosophic the thought, of Dryden than of Johnson. The fact is, in any case, that Wit is a word which has been gradually losing its extension. To Dryden it was tantamount to imagination. You may therefore think that its extension could be no greater; but there is a real contraction of the spirit even between Cowley and Dryden. Even Cowley defines Wit in contrast to what we should call cheapness; but it is probable that he is protecting Wit against those who would take cheapness for Wit, than against any who might identify Wit and cheapness. It must be admitted that in the same stanza Cowley appears to make the blush of the author the fire which should purge away the dross of obscenity: a figure which we should not allow to distract us from the excellence of his criticism.[18]

> Tell me, O tell, what kind of thing is *Wit*,
> Thou who *Master* art of it.
> For the *First matter* loves *Variety* less;
> Less *Women* love't, either in *Love* or *Dress*;
> A thousand different shapes it bears

Comely in thousand shapes appears.
Yonder we saw it plain; and here 'tis now,
Like *Spirits* in a *Place*, we know not *How*.

. . . . . .

'Tis not to force some lifeless *Verses* meet
With their five gowty feet.
All ev'ry where, like *Mans*, must be the *Soul*,
And *Reason* the *Inferior Powers* controul. . . . .

Yet 'tis not to adorn, and gild each part;
That shows more *Cost*, then *Art*.
Jewels at *Nose* and *Lips* but ill appear;
Rather then *all things Wit*, let *none* be there. . . . .

'Tis not such *Lines* as almost crack the *Stage*
When *Bajazet* begins to rage. . . . .

In a true piece of *Wit* all things must be,
Yet all things there *agree*.
As in the *Ark*, joyn'd without force or strife,
All *Creatures* dwelt; all *Creatures* that had *Life*.
Or as the *Primitive Forms* of all.
(If we compare great things with small)
Which without *Discord* or *Confusion* lie,
In that strange *Mirror* of the Deitie.[19]

This is not only good poetry itself, Cowley at his best, but it is a better criticism of Donne than either Dryden or Johnson could have made. And yet it is a poem which as a poem Dryden or Johnson could have understood better than either could have understood Donne.

Cowley is indeed a small man; a pathetic little celibate epicurean, paraphrasing Horace on the virtues of a country life, and complaining that he can get no money from his tenants, and has his meadows eaten up every night by cattle put in by his neighbours.[20] And yet, though every one of the elements which made up his mind was shrunk, there is something of magnificence in the way they were put together, just as there was some pluck in the temper of this little college mouse who spied for the royal cause.[21] There was still a kind of comprehensiveness about his mind, though he be preserved rather because he happens to be the last of the metaphysicals and

the first of the Augustans. He is Augustan in his puerile epicureanism, in which he provides an analogy to Saint-Évremond, and the French free-thinkers;[22] Augustan also in being a good churchman. A new poetry was arising:

> My eye descending from the hill, surveys
> Where Thames among the wanton vallies strays.
> Thames, the most lov'd of all the Ocean's sons
> By his old sire, to his embraces runs;
> Hasting to pay his tribute to the sea,
> Like mortal life to meet eternity.
> Though with those streams he no resemblance hold,
> Whose foam is amber, and their gravel gold . . . .
> Oh could I flow like thee, and make thy streams
> My great example, as it is my theme!
> Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull;
> Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full. . . . .[23]

These lines of Denham, though here and there they might issue out of Sylvester, are in the new style.[24] It is rather through Dryden, in the "Alexander's Feast" and "St. Cecilia" that we trace the descent from Donne; Dryden in his early poems – as the "Astraea Redux" – was a late conceited poet;[25] and in the ode he and Cowley meet. I like to quote, both as an example of this link between Donne and Dryden, and because it illustrates Cowley's enthusiasm for the philosophy of his day – different from that of Donne's – Cowley's ode "To Mr. Hobs."

> Vast *Bodies* of *Philosophie*
> I oft have seen, and read,
> But all are *Bodies Dead*,
> Or *Bodies* by *Art fashioned*:
> I never yet the *Living Soul* could see,
> But in thy *Books* and *Thee*.
> 'Tis only *God* can know
> Whether the fair *Idea* thou dost show
> Agree intirely with his *own*, or no.
> This I dare boldly tell,
> 'Tis so like *Truth* 'twill serve our turn as well.
> *Just*, as in *Nature* thy *Proportions* be,

As full of *Concord* their *Varietie*,
As *firm* the parts upon their *Center* rest,
And all so *Solid* are that they at least
As much as *Nature*, *Emptiness detest*.

Long did the mighty *Stagirite* retain
The *universal Intellectual reign*,
Saw his own Countreys short-liv'ed *Leopard* slain;
The stronger *Roman-Eagle* did out-fly,
Oftener *renewed* his *Age*, and saw that *Dy*.
Mecha it self, in spite of *Mahumet* possest,
And chas'ed by a wild *Deluge* from the *East*,
His *Monarchy* new planted in the *West*.
But as in time each great imperial race
Degenerates, and gives some new one place:
So did this noble Empire wast,
Sunk by degrees from glories past,
And in the *School-mens* hands it perisht quite at last.
Then nought but *Words* it grew,
And those all *Barb'arous* too.
It *perisht*, and it *vanisht* there,
The *Life* and *Soul* breath'd out, became but empty *Air*.[26]

In my last lecture I shall examine some nineteenth-century specimens of metaphysical poetry, in order that we may come as near as possible to a definition valid for all times up to the present. But we have already arrived at the point where we should reconsider the characteristics of the metaphysical poetry of the age of Donne. The metaphysical thought is partly prepared by the meditative verse of such poets as Davies and Fulke Greville (And therefore perhaps partly by the choruses of Seneca);[27] and the conceited style is partly anticipated by the bombastic styles of the Elizabethans and perhaps also by euphuism in Lyly and in Sidney. Between 1580 and 1680 the Word – verb, substantive and adjective – undergoes a very great change, a change which may be apprehended by studying the language of Donne in contrast with the language of Marlowe, and then studying the language of Donne in contrast with the language of Dryden. It is remarkable how often in the history of poetry, it is difficult to distinguish reaction from tradition. To us, the Romantic poets of the early nineteenth century seem merely to prolong with more excitement the language and sentiments

of the latter half of the eighteenth; to themselves, they seemed in complete revolt. And further – to react against a style is to be influenced by it. Donne with his interest in contemporary actualities, his accurate observation, his magazine of science and philosophy, his comparatively plain speech unembellished from Grecian mythology, is yet both a reformer and a continuator of the Elizabethan language. Dryden with his plain good sense, his reasonable mind, his clear distinctions and distaste for the far-fetched, is in revolt against Donne, whose influence on the other hand he continues.

The excesses of the ultimate descendants of Dryden were worse than the excesses of the immediate descendants of Donne. In the Caroline poetry in general there is a simplicity of language, a freshness and directness of phrase, more common than at any other time. It is the thought, not the language, which is tormented. The influence of Donne coalesced with the new influences from Italy to form a second type of metaphysical poetry, which is best and most completely illustrated by Crashaw. Crashaw had I think little direct influence upon style, for as you have witnessed, Cowley, through whom the metaphysical influence was propagated, reverted to Donne. Nevertheless, I believe that Crashaw, with his introduction of the Spanish Mood into English literature, brought something which became an element in the degraded sentiment and sensibility of the later eighteenth century.

We have therefore to consider the centre of gravity of metaphysical poetry to lie somewhere between Donne and Crashaw, but nearer the former than the latter. The remaining poets whom at the beginning I classified tentatively with these writers, fall either primarily under Crashaw or under Donne, with greater or lesser proportions of the other. I take Donne and Crashaw to be metaphysical by their types of mind, and therefore metaphysical in virtually everything they wrote. The others are metaphysical either at moments, or through acquiring certain mental habits of association of ideas, or are sometimes not metaphysical at all. The most mixed and baffling of this mixed type is Marvell; the purest and most elegant is George Herbert. The best example of that approximation to the metaphysical thought through the conceited style is that which I have quoted from Marvell –

> Annihilating all that's made
> To a green thought in a green shade[28]

a play with words which is a real play with thought. A compression which is conceited and metaphysical, and which shows the effect also of the immense compressions of meaning operated by Shakespeare, is the line of Herbert

> At length I heard a raggèd noise and mirth[29]

where what was heard was the noise, qualified as mirthful, and as being the kind of mirthful noise produced by ragged people (thieves and murderers.) Another curious instance from Herbert is the

> Church-bels beyond the starres heard; the souls bloud;
> The land of spices; something understood.[30]

where the effect is not the sum of the effects of the four images; the direct meaning of the images in a very remarkable way cancel each other out; so that at the end an exact suggestion is obtained which is not even partially present in any of the images taken alone; an extension, and no vague one, beyond the bounds of thought.

Such instances might be multiplied indefinitely. What is constantly performed by these poets is the refinement and subdivision of a simple emotion by infusing it into a turn of thought of some difficulty, and this is often done by Carew; and less often the evocation of new feelings which appear as the equivalents of mental speculations.[31] This latter, of course, is more than anyone's the property of Donne. Crashaw at his greatest yokes a simple passion, only of great intensity, to an unfamiliar object. The essential differences between Dante and Donne, and Dante and Crashaw, are, to sum up, these: that in Dante there is a system of thought to which is exactly equivalent a system of feeling, whilst with Donne there is only a kind of flow of thought to which is equivalent a flow of feeling; and that Dante alters or transforms his human feeling into divine feeling when applying it to divine objects, whilst Crashaw applies human feelings, though of intensity equal to any ever applied to human objects, almost unaltered to divine objects.

It is a postulate implicit in all metaphysical poetry that nothing is ineffable, that the most rarified feeling can be exact and exactly expressed. If you cease to be able to express feelings you cease to be able to have them, and sensibility is replaced by sentiment, in the end by the vague expression of the vague, and poetry degenerates into a diversity of noises. If the foregoing sentence has any meaning, it implies that Swinburne's *Triumph of*

Time follows in a certain logical order of history, and in its due place, such a poem as Young's *Night Thoughts* or even Darwin's *Loves of the Plants*.[32]

The poetry of the eighteenth century was given a direction by Dryden and subsequently by Pope, men who differed very much from each other, but who resemble each other in great force and great precision within narrow limits. I do not mean that Dryden was limited to the mock heroic or the burlesque; I once attempted in an essay to point out the considerable range of moods that Dryden could treat.[33] But each one of these moods, however numerous they may be, is limited; compare Dryden's Antony with Shakespeare's and you see that poetry has lost much of its flexibility to the variations of life.[34] Instead of poetry, you get genres of poetry; in Milton you have the greatest writer who has ever existed of a limited genre. The poetry of Milton, the poetry of Dryden, the poetry of Pope, each so excellent in its kind, and so satisfying, was inevitably followed by an outburst of sentiment. This [has] of course a certain parallel in French literature, and the *Rêveries d'un promeneur solitaire* provide a complete illustration of the outburst of sentiment, of the ineffable emotion;[35] the degradation, from John of the Cross to Rousseau, is complete. But the approach of sentiment is already faintly apparent in Pope, and clearly distinguishable in Gray and Collins and the inferior Shenstone;[36] rigidly excluded by the satirists to Churchill and Johnson, it grows in strength in the verse of the descriptive poets, Thomson and Young to Wordsworth and Coleridge (Chamonix), in the last of whom it is allied with a kind of philosophy from the German stream.[37] The maudlin provincialism of Burns adds to it. Now we have seen that in the best of the metaphysical poetry there is exactness; the object of feeling is always definite. And this is perhaps one of the healthier reasons why their poetry is popular today; by a healthy reaction against vagueness. It is also one of the reasons why there is so little that I should call metaphysical in the nineteenth century: the age was still campaigning against the restrictions of the so-called age of reason. Before entering upon the question of metaphysical poetry in France in the nineteenth century, it is necessary to clear up any doubts that there may be. Metaphysical poetry involves the existence of a background of thought, of a definite system or fragments of definite systems. Behind Dante there was Aquinas, behind Donne the fragments of every philosophical system and every theological system up to his own time; and although the whole was chaos, the fragments were still sharp and identifiable. Behind Crashaw were the Spanish mystics and the Catholic Church of his day. Behind Cowley was chiefly Donne – it is mostly second hand;

except that he did have toward Hobbes something of the feeling of a metaphysical poet toward a philosopher. One may say, was there not a philosophy behind Pope? Even if only the philosophy of Bolingbroke? I think that the answer is, that Pope did in places use a sort of philosophical system of discourse, but that this philosophy does not in any way direct, control, restrain or provide a definite object for his feelings. The words classic and romantic have been so widely employed that their contrast can easily be reduced to absurdity; for it follows from what I have been saying that the first "classic" poet (in the Augustan sense) – Pope – is also one of the first "romantic" poets in my context of the history of emotion or sensibility.

In the nineteenth century I cannot think of any English poet who was able so to feel a philosophical idea as to make it yield its emotional equivalent. There are meditative poets – Arnold or George Meredith, for instance. There are reflective poets, such as Browning. There is Swinburne, whom Mr. Saintsbury calls "metaphysical," but who seems to me, and I hope will on consideration seem to you, at the opposite pole from metaphysicality or even Marinism.[38] Can you find in any of these that identity, that unity in difference

E fue due in uno ed uno in due[39]

or is there not everywhere that separation, with consequent waste, of thought and feeling of which I have spoken? I admit doubtful poems, perhaps doubtful cases; I am not sure that Francis Thompson does not sometimes, by an extraordinary tour de force in an exhausted idiom, approach his master Crashaw.[40] But one must also distinguish between the poets, like perhaps Francis Thompson and certainly Shelley, who had metaphysical gifts, and their actual accomplishment, which is of their age.

There remains I think only the doubtful case of Blake, which has not been placed. Blake is I think in one aspect like Chapman, and rather like Mr. Yeats, in being a poet of juxtaposition of two worlds, rather than a metaphysical.

What are these golden builders doing
In melancholy, ever-weeping Paddington?[41]

And a verse like

My Spectre around me night and day
Like a wild beast guards my way;

My Emanation far within
Weeps incessantly for my sin.[42]

is not the emotional equivalent of thought, and it is to me – it is an heretical admission – uncertain whether it is poetry. When thought, such as that of Dante or Donne, is clearly expressible in another form, then it is not necessary to understand the thought to appreciate the poetry, for the poetry and the thought are quite distinct; and [when they are] one, it is sufficient that the author of the verse understand what he means. But here as so often with Blake, I feel that here is the thought itself; and that my enjoyment is not as with Dante a double enjoyment, but a confused enjoyment, the direct emotional enjoyment of an idea which I do not understand, and which if I understood, I should enjoy as an idea rather than as poetry. This is a difficult and debatable ground. For if, after absorbing a quantity of Dante and Guido and Donne and Crashaw, you take up Blake and feel that Blake's poetry is definitely metaphysical, either in my sense or in some other sense which you choose to give it, then, so far as you are concerned, my whole theory collapses. If you take the trouble to do this, I shall be interested to know what happens.

NOTES

1. The Stuart kings of the Caroline period (Carolus being Latin for Charles) included Charles I, who reigned from 1625 until his execution in 1649, and his son Charles II. Charles II's succession in 1649 was ruled unlawful by the Parliamentarians, who dissolved the monarchy and established the Commonwealth under Cromwell. When Cromwell defeated Charles II at the Battle of Worcester in 1651, Charles fled to mainland Europe, where he spent the next nine years in exile. After Cromwell's death, he was recalled to England for his Restoration in May 1660.

2. This passage was addressed obliquely to I. A. Richards, who in the *Criterion* of July 1925 had stated that in *The Waste Land* TSE had effected "a complete severance between his poetry and *all* beliefs" (520). This article, and subsequent conversations with Richards on the topic, provoked TSE's "A Note on Poetry and Belief" (1927), in which he rejoined: "As for the poem of my own in question, I cannot for the life of me see the 'complete separation' from all belief – or it is something no more complete than the separation of Christina Rossetti from Dante." *The Enemy* (Jan 1927), 16.

3. Cowley met Thomas Hobbes in Paris in 1646, became a disciple, and praised him lavishly for his eloquence, reason, and wit in "To Mr. Hobs" (1655).

4. Cowley opens "The Garden" (1667) with a declaration of his desire to "be master at last of a small house and large garden, with very moderate conveniences joyned to them, and there dedicate the remainder of my life only to the culture of them and study of Nature." *Abraham Cowley: Essays, Plays and Sundry Verses*, ed. A. R. Waller (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1906), 420; hereafter *Abraham Cowley: Essays*.

5. In *A Proposition for the Advancement of Experimental Philosophy* (1661), Cowley proposed that a "Philosophical Colledge" be situated within three miles of London and that the company received into it include "Four old Women, to tend the Chambers, keep the House clean, and such like services." *Abraham Cowley: Essays*, 248.

6†. TSE later excised the following sentence: "Would that his advice had been taken!" Cowley suggested such a discipline in "Of Agriculture," included in his posthumous *Essays* (1668): "But, Did ever any Father provide a Tutor for his Son to instruct him betimes in the Nature and Improvements of that Land which he intended to leave him? That is at least a superfluity, and this a Defect in our manner of Education; and therefore I could wish . . . that one Colledge in each University were erected, and appropriated to this study, as well as there are to Medecin, and the Civil Law." *Abraham Cowley: Essays*, 404.

7. *The Mistress; or, Several Copies of Love-Verses* was first published in 1647.

8. Cowley had known Crashaw since the two were undergraduates at Cambridge; his elegy, "On the Death of Mr. Crashaw," was first published in *Miscellanies*, the first section of Cowley's *Poems* (1656); included in *MLP* 193-95.

9. Johnson, "Life of Cowley," *Lives*, 3.

10. "My Dyet," from *The Mistress*; *Poems*, 89. TSE had written to Aldington on 3 Oct 1921: "*Would you like me to lend you my Cowley's Poems* – apparently complete, four little volumes in an old edition of British poets?" (*L1* 587). This was the four-volume *The Poetical Works of Abraham Cowley* (Edinburgh: Apollo Press, 1778). Though the edition was still in his library, for this lecture TSE borrowed from the London Library A. R. Waller's edition of the *Poems: Miscellanies, The Mistress, Pindarique Odes, Davideis, Verses Written on Several Occasions* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1905); here 89.

11. i.e., "The Good-Morrow," which TSE discussed in his second lecture (638).

12. "Platonick Love," stanzas 1 and 4; *Poems*, 75-76.

13. An allusion to Cowley's telescope conceit in the second stanza of "Ode. Of Wit" (1656): "Some things do through our Judgment pass / As through a *Multiplying Glass*. / And sometimes, if the *Object* be too far, / We take a *Falling Meteor* for a *Star*." *Poems*, 17.

14. TSE discusses the difference between the meaning of "metaphysical" in Dryden and Johnson in his first lecture (612); he touches upon the development of "wit" in lecture IV (673).

15. "The Life of Cowley," *Lives*, 9.

16. TSE wrote in "The Metaphysical Poets": "When a poet's mind is perfectly equipped for its work, it is constantly amalgamating disparate experience" (380).

17. Dryden, "The Proper Wit of Poetry," *Dramatic Essays*, 192.

18. TSE prefaces his quotation of Cowley's "Ode. Of Wit" by referring to lines in stanza 6: "Such *Dross the Fire* must purge away; 'tis just / The *Author blush*, there where the *Reader* must." *Poems*, 18.

19. "Ode. Of Wit," from stanzas 1, 4, 5, 7, and 8, of 9 stanzas. *Poems*, 16-18.

20. TSE refers to "A Paraphrase upon the 10th Epistle of the First Book of Horace" in "Of Agriculture." *Abraham Cowley: Essays*, 416-18. In a letter of 21 May 1665, Cowley wrote to Dr. Thomas Sprat, his biographer, after arriving at Chertsey farm: "This is my personal fortune here to begin with. And, besides, I can get no money from my tenants, and have my meadows eaten up every night by cattle put in by my neighbours." As printed in Johnson's "Life of Cowley," *Lives*, 8.

21. Cowley was engaged as a spy for the Royalist cause when he returned from exile in 1656, whereupon he masked his position by taking an MD at Oxford. "College mouse" is an allusion to the country mouse and the city mouse in Cowley's "The Country Mouse. A *Paraphrase upon* Horace *2 Book, Satyr. 6*," in *Abraham Cowley: Essays*, 414-16.

22. After the Restoration, Cowley fraternized in London with the French exile Saint-Évremond, wit, courtier, and littérateur who earlier published a satire on the French Academy, *La Comédie des académistes* [The Comedy of the Academics] (1643). TSE recalls Richard Aldington's "Cowley and the French Epicureans" in the *New Statesman* (5 Nov 1921, 133-34), where Aldington discusses the influence on Cowley of the Epicurean philosopher Pierre Gassendi and his followers, including Saint-Évremond. TSE wrote to Aldington on the day the article appeared: "The ignorance about the subject is so universal that the erudition will hardly be noticed. Gassendi, for example, is no more than a name to me, and I know *nothing* of T.[héophile] de Viau" (*L1* 602).

23. "Cooper's Hill" (1642, 1665), ll. 159-66, 189-92; as printed in volume VII of *The Works of the English Poets*, ed. Alexander Chalmers (London: C. Whittingham, 1810), which TSE borrowed from the London Library.

24. Joshua Sylvester (1563-1618), a minor Elizabethan poet best known for his achievements as a translator, particularly of the work of French poet Guillaume de Salluste Du Bartas in *Bartas: His Devine Weekes and Workes* (1605).

25. Dryden's *Astrea Redux* (1660) celebrates the return of Charles II to the throne.

26. The first two of six stanzas from Cowley's Pindaric ode, "To Mr. Hobs" (1655, 1656). *Poems*, 188.

27. Sir John Davies (1569-1626), known for his "Orchestra; or, A Poem of Dancing" (1594), and his philosophical poem, *Nosce Teipsum* [Know Thyself] (1599), to which TSE returns later in 1926 in "Sir John Davies" (860). In "Seneca in Elizabethan Translation" (1927), TSE records his appreciation for "some magnificent passages, especially in the choruses" of Fulke Greville but admits that "they have much dullness also; and they do not imitate Seneca nearly so faithfully as either those of Alexander or those of Daniel" (*SE* 94).

28. "The Garden," ll. 47-48; TSE quoted these lines in the sixth Clark lecture (717).

29. "Redemption," line 12, a sonnet from *The Temple* (1633). The line is marked in TSE's copy of the World's Classics edition of *The Poems of George Herbert* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1907), 35.

30. "Prayer 1" (1633), ll. 13-14. The lines are marked in TSE's copy of *The Poems of George Herbert* (45).

31. Caroline poet Thomas Carew (ca. 1595-1640), author of "A Rapture" (1640) and *Coelum Britannicum* (1634).

32. TSE described the "diffuseness" of Swinburne's *The Triumph of Time* (1862) in "Swinburne as Poet" (181); he refers to *The Complaint; or, Night Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality* (1742-5, collected 1750) by poet and dramatist Edward Young (1683-1765) and *The Loves of the Plants* (1789) by Erasmus Darwin.

33. In "John Dryden" (1921) TSE argued that the "capacity for assimilation, and the consequent extent of range, are conspicuous qualities of Dryden" (356).

34. TSE later compares Dryden's *All for Love; or, The World Well Lost* (1677) and its acknowledged model, Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, at some length in "Dryden the Dramatist" (1931): "There is one great play [of Dryden's] in blank verse, *All for Love*, and the

difficulty about that is that Shakespeare's play on the same subject, *Antony and Cleopatra*, is very much greater – though not necessarily a much finer *play*." *The Listener*, 5 (22 Apr 1931), 681.

35. Rousseau's last work, *Rêveries d'un promeneur solitaire* [Reveries of a Solitary Walker] (1782), consists of ten essays or "Walks" in which he explores and explains his feelings and sentiments solely for self-enlightenment. TSE characterized the emotional character of the volume in "Diderot," his 1917 review of *Diderot's Early Philosophical Works* (1.520-21).

36. The poet and letter-writer William Shenstone (1714-63), author of *The Schoolmistress* (1742). In the "Introductory Essay" for his edition of Samuel Johnson's *London: A Poem and The Vanity of Human Wishes* (1930), TSE later describes Shenstone's eclogues as "consummately dull" (14).

37. James Thomson (1700-48), born and educated in Scotland, became the most popular nature poet of the eighteen century with his descriptive sequence, *The Seasons* (1730; revised and expanded, 1744).

TSE refers parenthetically to Coleridge's "Hymn before Sun-Rise, in the Vale of Chamouni" (1802), which describes the valley of Chamouni (or Chamonix) and Mount Blanc in the Savoy Alps. In Feb 1799, Coleridge matriculated at the University of Göttingen where he read Kant, Schiller, and the post-Kantian philosophers who influenced his aesthetics and philosophy.

38. In response to TSE's "The Metaphysical Poets" (375), George Saintsbury wrote to the editor of the *TLS* (27 Oct 1921) and declared: "it is certain that Mr. Swinburne . . . was 'right metaphysical' in his method" (698). For TSE's reply, see "The Metaphysical Poets (To the Editor of the *TLS*)" (386).

39. *Inferno* XXVII.125. *Trans*: "and they were two in one, and one in two"; TSE misquotes Dante's description of Bertrand de Born, the Provençal troubadour who is said to have instigated a quarrel between Henry II of England and his son Prince Henry. Decapitated in hell for the offence, Bertrand holds up his head by the hair like a lantern when Dante and Virgil encounter him in the ninth bolgia among the sowers of discord: "Di sè faceva a sè stesso lucerna, / ed eran due in uno, ed uno in due; / com'esser può, quei sa che sì governa." *Trans*: "Of itself it made for itself a lamp, and they were two in one, and one in two; how this can be, He knows who so ordains" (*DC1* 318-19).

40. The Roman Catholic poet Francis Thompson (1859-1907) had been devoted to Crashaw's verse since childhood, had expressed his critical admiration in "Richard Crashaw" (1889), and had drawn upon Crashaw's imagery and use of the ode in some of his most successful poems – "Daisy" (1893), "Ode to the Setting Sun," and "From the Night of Forebeing" (both 1897). TSE lectured on Thompson as a nineties "poet of religious faith" in his 1917 Extension courses (1.587). He had in his library a copy of Thompson's best-known poem, *The Hound of Heaven* (London: Burns & Oates, 1893).

41. From Blake's *Jerusalem* (1804-20), chapter 1, plate 27, "To the Jews" ("The fields from Islington to Marybone"), ll. 25-26: *read*: "What are those Golden Builders doing / Near mournful ever-weeping Paddington?" *The Poetical Works of William Blake*, ed. John Sampson (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1913), 391. This edition was listed in an inventory of TSE's library in 1934 (Bodleian), since removed.

42. "My Spectre around me night and day," ll. 1-4, from the *Rossetti Manuscript* (ca. 1789-1811), as printed in *The Poetical Works of William Blake*, 128.

Lecture VIII

The Nineteenth Century: Summary and Comparison

For several generations, we have been told by philosophers and half-philosophers, that if you cease to believe in Good and Evil, they do not exist. Good and Evil are concepts which have had their birth and their development, according to Westermarck and others – remember that Westermarck is a Scandinavian and therefore a Lutheran – and concepts which have or have had at best economic, genetic, or hygienic justifications.[1] We have not been so often told, what is equally true, that if we do believe in Good and Evil then they do exist. One generation doubted, one disbelieved, and the present generation has forgotten, that Good and Evil can be real. Most of the literature of England, and part of the literature of France, in the nineteenth century, is based on the doubt or disbelief in Good and Evil. I name at random Alfred de Musset, Charles Dickens, Thackeray and Thomas Hardy. On the other hand a great part of French literature – and this is why in my opinion the French literature of the nineteenth century is above the English literature of the same period – requires a background of Good and Evil, even if these abstractions do not appear on the front of the stage. I name Stendhal and Balzac. Baudelaire was preoccupied with the problem. As for moral detachment – George Eliot, the author of [*Amos Barton*],[2] could give points on detachment to Flaubert, who was in his way and in his time as much occupied with moral realities – contrasted with social realities – as was Dante himself.

The rebirth of Good and Evil in the nineteenth century is often abortive and never led to a full growth. Its ancestry is mixed, but by an odd accident, Byron (I believe) had something to do with it. With Byron, if you like, everything was pose, but the existence of a pose implies the possibility of a reality to which the pose pretends. One of the constant by-products of this revival of morality is Satanism; but even Satanism – the cultivation of Evil – in any of its curious forms, in part of Baudelaire, in Barbey d'Aurevilly, in Huysmans, in Wilde's *Pen, Pencil and Poison* – is a derivative or an imitation of spiritual life.[3] The present age, which is far better behaved and far less moral than the so-called "Nineties," is also far more Victorian.

Byron influenced Poe, and Poe – a writer almost completely unappreciated by Anglo-Saxon readers –[4†] influenced Baudelaire. I do not suggest that the influence of Poe is the only considerable influence upon Baudelaire, or that other influences did not lead him to his moral view of the world. Baudelaire and D'Aurevilly begat Huysmans, the author of *En Route* (and begetter, upon Walter Pater, of Oscar Wilde); Baudelaire and Théophile Gautier produced Mallarmé, who begat Valéry; Baudelaire, I believe, plus certain other influences produced Laforgue and Corbière, who are responsible for Jean Cocteau and Blaise Cendrars;[5] and Baudelaire with other influences produced Rimbaud, who produced the contemporary *surréalistes*. If there were world enough and time it would be my duty to show where the metaphysical element begins, how it is manifested, and where it ends, in this genealogy; Baudelaire is much more than a metaphysical poet, Cocteau or Breton much less;[6] I will merely pick out two intermediate figures: Laforgue and Corbière. The foregoing is merely intended to state the theory that the real metaphysical poetry of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries springs from the belief in Good and Evil, and consists in a conscious and deliberate contrast and confusion of the moral and intellectual with the non-moral and unintellectual. In the post-metaphysical poetry of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the contrast and confusion no longer exist, one of the terms has been suppressed, and you get *Le Panama*, *Les Mariés de la Tour Eiffel*,[7] and *Le Poisson soluble*.[8] Or you get the purely conceited, the stuffed bird of Paradise.[9]

Jules Laforgue was a young man who died at the age of twenty-seven in the year 1877. He was "reader" to a German Princess, and in Berlin picked up some of the language and a good deal of the philosophy, especially Kant, Schopenhauer and Hartmann, married an English girl (some of whose language he also acquired) became tuberculous and died in poverty. I believe the widow died soon after.[10] I think the first note about him in English was by Sir Edmund Gosse, but Mr. Arthur Symons wrote an attractive study in his book *The Symbolist Movement*.[11] His poetry, and even his prose, is immature, rough and sentimental. He was a young man of ardent feelings, of no cynicism, of active and abstract intellect, and with a singular gift for the emotions of metaphysics. He had an innate craving for order: that is, that every feeling should have its intellectual equivalent, its philosophical justification, and that every idea should have its emotional equivalent, its sentimental justification. The only world in which he could have satisfied himself, therefore, was a world such as Dante's. The disintegration of the

intellect, in Laforgue, had reached a much more advanced stage than with Donne: for Laforgue, life was consciously divided into thought and feeling; but his feelings were such as required an intellectual completion, a beatitude, and the philosophical systems which he embraced were so much felt as to require a sensuous completion. They did not fit. Hence the metaphysicality of Laforgue reaches in two directions: the intellectualizing of the feeling and the emotionalising of the idea. Where they meet, they come into conflict, and Laforgue's irony, an irony always employed against himself, ensues. This appears in the words of his Laertes to his Hamlet, in his curious prose version:

> – If (says Laertes meeting Hamlet at the grave of Ophelia) you were not a wretched madman, quite irresponsible according to the most recent investigations of medical science, you would be obliged to give me immediate satisfaction for the death of my honourable father and my sister – that highly accomplished young woman [. . .]
> – O Laertes, that's all one to me. But be sure that I allow for your point of view.
> – Good Heaven, what lack of any moral sense! [. . .]
> They sent to search for the corpse with torches of the best quality.[12]

Laforgue is the wholly self-conscious.

> Bref, j'allais me donner d'un "Je vous aime"
> Quand je m'avisai non sans peine
> Que d'abord je ne me possédais pas bien moi-même.[13]

That "je m'avisai" is always interrupting, just as the disparity between the meaning of human lives and what they should mean is always driving his Hamlet back onto himself. But he is one who "ne croit à son Moi qu'à ses moments perdus,"[14] in disaccord, and later in the same poem ("Dimanches," 297) he repeats the theme of Baudelaire and Emerson: "je ne suis qu'un faux accord" or "Seigneur, donnez-moi le force et le courage / De contempler mon corps et mon coeur sans dégoût."[15]

> Ah ! que je te les tordrais avec plaisir,
> Ce corps bijou, ce cœur à ténor . . .
>
> Non, non! C'est sucer la chair d'un cœur élu,
> Adorer d'incurables organes . . .

Et ce n'est pas sa chair qui me serait tout,
Et je ne serais pas qu'un grand cœur pour elle . . .

L'âme et la chair, la chair et l'âme,
C'est l'Esprit édénique et fier
D'être un peu l'Homme avec la Femme . . .

– Allons, dernier des poètes,
Toujours enfermé tu te rendras malade!
Vois, il fait beau temps, tout le monde est dehors,
Va donc acheter deux sous d'ellébore,
Ça te fera une petite promenade.[16]

Later, in the same group of poems, he speaks of "Les Jeunes Filles inviolables et frêles" going to church, and says of himself:

Moi, je ne vais pas à l'église,
Moi, je suis le Grand Chancelier de l'Analyse . . .[17]

It is noticeable how often the words "inconscient," "néant," and "L'absolu" and such philosophical terms from the vocabulary of Schopenhauer and Hartmann, the Valkyrie, and such properties from the dramas of Wagner, recur.[18] Laforgue is the nearest verse equivalent to the philosophies of Schopenhauer and Hartmann, the philosophy of the unconscious and of annihilation, just as Wagner is the nearest music equivalent to the same philosophies, though apart from this approximation to a similar philosophic mood, it would be difficult to say what there is in common between Wagner and Laforgue. But in Laforgue there is continuous war between the feelings implied by his ideas, and the ideas implied by his feelings. The system of Schopenhauer collapses, but in a different ruin from that of *Tristan und Isolde*.[19]

The public cries recommence. Important notice! Redemption Loan has weakened, Panama Canal shares firm. Auctions, experts. Advances against securities quoted or unquoted, purchase of unencumbered properties or annuities; advances against expectations; time-tables, annuals, new-year's gifts. Circular tours at reduced prices. Madame Ludovic predicts the future, daily, from 2 to 4. Au paradis des Enfants: toys for children and cotillon favours for adults . . . Sole agency! . . . Cylinder machines Marinoni! Everything guaranteed, everything for nothing! Oh the rapidity of life also sole agency . . .[20]

One would be inclined to date this 1919, school of Tristan Tzara's Dadaism. No, it is Jules Laforgue in August 1884 deploring the existence of the state of affairs which we usually date from the Treaty of Versailles.[21] Only Laforgue is in revolt, not in acceptance; he is at once the sentimentalist day-dreaming over the *jeune fille* at the piano with her geraniums, and the behaviourist inspecting her reflexes.[22] What he wants, you see, is either a *Vita Nuova* to justify, dignify and integrate his sentiments toward the *jeune fille* in a system of the universe, or else some system of thought which shall keep a place for and even enhance these feelings and at the same time enable him to feel as intensely the abstract world. On the one hand he was fascinated by Miss Leah Lee, the English governess, and on the other hand by the Kantian pseudo-Buddhism of Schopenhauer and Hartmann. What is interesting in Laforgue is not his accomplishment; as an artist he is as much below Corbière and Rimbaud as he is above Verlaine as an intellect. What is interesting and significant is the sacrifice of his art and his mind before an insoluble problem. Here is a poet genuinely occupied with the relation of feeling and thought, not, like Browning and Meredith, playing with their mechanical combinations. Baudelaire had the genius to attempt an insoluble problem and yet be a great artist; if Laforgue was not a great artist, it is not for us, who have dealt no better with the problem, to sneer at him.

If we can compare Laforgue, with very great differences, to Donne, so we can compare Corbière, with equal differences, to Crashaw. Not that Corbière is a religious poet: with these poets we have reached something which, for the nineteenth century, was more fundamental than religious devotion. Corbière is a finer poet, though a lesser intellect, than Laforgue; Laforgue was twenty-seven when he died, Corbière thirty; Laforgue died in 1887, Corbière in 1875. Also of lung trouble. In the work of Corbière there is less evidence of philosophic reading; he has less direct feeling of "the absolute," "the unconscious," and the other abstractions which aroused Laforgue's passion, but there is the same product of thought-feeling and feeling-thought. Like Crashaw, with Corbière the centre of gravity is more the word and the phrase, and he therefore has phrases which recall, in our comparison, the concentrated conceit of Crashaw. As we observed that Marvell, in his more conceited work, could concentrate more wit into a couple of words than is usual in Donne –

Like a green thought in a green shade,[23]

or, of a spring,

Might a soul bathe there, and be clean?[24]

where images are arbitrarily but felicitously yoked together, so Corbière at his best can find an image, a parallel, which in its way is as fine as Dante or Shakespeare.

From his greatest poem, *La Rapsode foraine*, the assemblage of crippled and diseased at a religious festival in Brittany –

Là, ce tronc d'homme où croît l'ulcère,
Contre un tronc d'arbre où croît le gui . . . .

"This trunk of a man on which the ulcer grows, (leaning) against this trunk of a tree on which grows the mistletoe": this sudden and surprising collocation of the animal and vegetable, with the added horror thrown back upon the human disease, is worthy of Dante.[25] Corbière's use of something resembling the conceit is more evident in his series of *Petits Rondels pour après*, exequies on the death of a poet, presumably himself (observe again how omnipresent is the Ego in metaphysical poetry of the nineteenth century). Here is one of them:

Va vite, léger peigneur de comêtes!
Les herbes au vent seront tes cheveux;
De ton œil béant jailliront les feux
Follets, prisonniers dans les pauvres têtes . . .

Les fleurs de tombeau qu'on nomme Amourettes
Foisonneront plein ton rire terreux . . .
Et les myosotis, ces fleurs d'oubliettes . . .

Ne fais pas le lourd; cercueils de poètes
Pour les croque-morts sont de simples jeux,
Boîtes à violon qui sonnent le creux . . .
Ils te croiront mort – les bourgeois sont bêtes –
Va vite, léger peigneur de comètes![26]

I am much mistaken if this be not a sequence of modern *concetti*. There is much, and of the best too, in Corbière (for instance the *Lettre du Mexique*)[27] which is not metaphysical; just as Rimbaud altogether is nearer to Blake, the visionary, the *illuminé*; but the poem I have just quoted seems to me as near as possible a modern analogy to the conceited metaphysical. The

satisfaction, when you analyse it, is due to the disparity between the idea and the image; so that what might be a cradle song for a baby becomes an elegy for a man of genius; there is the same yoking together of the dissimilar, which Johnson long ago noted in Donne and Cowley – with the effect of irony instead of wit. For the metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century were witty but not ironic – not ironic in so serious a way as this. Real irony is an expression of suffering, and the greatest ironist was the one who suffered the most – Swift.

It is impossible for me to enter upon further detail upon the metaphysical poetry of the nineteenth century. It has been impossible for me to do more than indicate, with the case of Laforgue and what is for our purpose the minor case of Corbière, that there is a type of metaphysical poetry existent in the nineteenth century, and that these poets were preoccupied, like the poets of the *trecento*, and the poets of the seventeenth century, consciously or unconsciously, with the relation of thought and feeling. I am aware that I have left a gap; I should have proved that Baudelaire was occupied with the problem of Good and Evil, instead of merely assuming that he was, and traced the history of this idea throughout the nineteenth century; and I should have shown that the problem of Laforgue, instead of being, as it appears, more comprehensive than Baudelaire's, was a smaller and less mature version of it. But these gaps I must for the present leave to you to fill in. My theory of metaphysical poetry is, you will have seen, a heavy one for a mere man of letters to shoulder. It implies a theory of the history of belief, in which the thirteenth century, and the seventeenth century, and the nineteenth century, all occupy their places in what I have called a process of disintegration.

You have understood that I take as metaphysical poetry that in which what is ordinarily apprehensible only by thought is brought within the grasp of feeling, or that in which what is ordinarily only felt is transformed into thought without ceasing to be feeling. My examples have been Donne for the former and Crashaw for the latter: in Crashaw by the substitution (an operation which is not easy or possible to many) of a divine object for a human. With the exception of Dante, my examples have been drawn from the restricted area of merely metaphysical poetry. At one time I was inclined to include Chapman with Donne and others amongst the metaphysicals;[28] I have withdrawn from this position by establishing a separate type for Chapman. Some of Chapman's most famous passages, as

Give me a spirit, that on life's rough sea . . .[29]

belong, I think, with the type of philosophical exposition which I illustrated in the first lecture with certain parts of Pope and incidental passages of Dante. The point which I have been blunderingly trying to reach is this –

Humanity reaches its higher levels of civilisation not chiefly by improvement of thought or by increase and variety of sensation, but by the extent of operation between acute sensation and acute thought. The most awful state of society that could be imagined would be that in which a maximum condition of sensibility was co-existent with a maximum attainment of thought – and no emotions uniting the two. It would probably be a very contented state, and is all the more awful for that. It would not be necessary even that each individual should have both maximum sensibility and a maximum intellect: try to imagine a society in which everyone was either a Marcel Proust or an Einstein, or an inferior grade of one or the other, and you have the thing itself. It is a worse nightmare than you think, and is more possible than you think; it is merely the existence of a highly perfected race of insects. Now it is the function of the metaphysical poet to transform thought into feeling and feeling into thought, as it is the function of other poets to fix and stabilise emotions as they exist. What I am insisting on is the role of the artist in the development and maintenance of the mind. It is difficult, certainly, and controversial, to decide what are the moments at which the human mind has attained its greatest range and unity. So many ages achieve perfection for themselves in certain details, while actually, and unobserved, living on the capital accumulated by apparently cruder but essentially more civilised ages. The eighteenth century was, I think, such an age which enjoyed the benefits, and wasted the stores, of preceding epochs. For some of the poetry of this age I have a great admiration. But it developed a petty intellect uncriticised by feeling, and an exuberant feeling uncriticised by thought. The nineteenth century paid for this debauch of Rousseau and the encyclopaedists.[30] Sensibility is always reaching after thought, and thought after sensibility. So the philosophies of the nineteenth century, whether of Kant, or Fichte, or Hegel, of Schopenhauer, or James, or Bradley or Russell are corrupted by feeling; the poetry of the nineteenth century, whether of Wordsworth, or Shelley, or Tennyson or Browning, is corrupted by thought. In this confusion a man like Laforgue was destroyed, for the philosophy which he endeavoured to feel was a philosophy already muddled by feeling – for what is more

emotional than the philosophy of Schopenhauer or Hartmann? – his feelings required quite another system of thought.

It may be said that if the philosophies of the nineteenth century had not been so poetical, the poetry of the nineteenth century might have been more metaphysical. For a perfect art to arise, there must be a kind of co-operation between philosophy and poetry. I mean only the sort of happy coincidence that existed between Dante and Aquinas. But this was not a mere coincidence: thought and feeling developed in such harmony during the thirteenth century, that the lesser men of Dante's circle, men who dealt only, but adequately, with a part of metaphysics, in poetry, were perfectly consistent. And as far as he goes, Guido Cavalcanti deals with certain details of metaphysical poetry more satisfactorily and completely than does Dante. I have tried to show, especially in the third lecture, that in the poetry of the thirteenth century the human spirit reached a greater sum of range, intensity and completeness of emotion than it has ever attained before or since. I have tried to show that the philosophers – such as St. Thomas – were more simply philosophers, and the poets more simply poets, than [they] have been at any time since. I have not in any way advocated a return to the thirteenth century, whatever that might mean, but only the eternal utility, in a world of change, of any achievement of perfection. I have tried to show that the chaos of the seventeenth century was a different chaos from that of the nineteenth century, and that it achieves a kind of unity in the strange ability of Donne to unite disparate thought in a continuity of feeling. A unity at the beginning of the century; later the world achieved a kind of specious unity by suppressing elements which afterwards burst out unpreparedly and without restraint. And finally, I have tried to indicate that Belief was a different thing for the thirteenth, for the seventeenth, and for the nineteenth century. Donne does not "believe in" Anglican theology in the same way that Dante believes in Aquinas; and Laforgue does not "believe in" Schopenhauer or Hartmann in the same way as either.

The "disintegration of the intellect" of which I speak was, so far as I can see, an inevitable process. The process of knowledge and the process of history go on relentlessly, and it is always "up to" the human being to adapt himself to the alterations for which he is but partially responsible. Having achieved an unity on a basis which, so far as we can see, was partial and inaccurate, we can only go on and wait for luck to provide another. We cannot resist the alterations effected by scientific discovery; what is lamentable is that religious and artistic values cannot be separated from the flux of this

development of knowledge and information. If they could be so separated by an astute theologian, psychologist, moralist, the world would be very different indeed.

At the present phase of the world's process, we are at a stage where everyone is tempted to do everyone else's work. The poet or the novelist, even if he does not make such claim himself, is acclaimed or censured for his contribution to "thought," to what belongs to metaphysics, theology or psychology. Similarly the psychologist investigates, as if they were static or fixed, states of mind which it is for the poet to make or unmake. Frontiers are vague; a poet may analyse his own poetry, or a psychologist burst into dithyrambs. On the one hand it is supposed that the function of the poet is merely to amuse or to thrill; on the other he is expected to provide a gospel for the multitude struggling toward the light. Both views are wrong. Surely the thinking of the poet should be no more than transposing into poetry the thought of the time which he selects as important to him. Neither Dante nor Donne nor Laforgue did more. They were no prophets; they merely performed the work of integrating thought into life, and so did Lucretius. What happens to a poet who has an original philosophy? Does he not become the victim of those who want their philosophy cheap and without thought, and is he not, like Blake, perpetually a riddle to those who seriously would estimate his greatness as a poet?

We have not, with the so-called metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century, arrived at what many of you will have expected; a neat and comprehensive definition which shall include all of the poets of that century and none other, and which shall justify the title of "metaphysical." But I think that I warned you in advance, that I did not intend to define the seventeenth century, or the first half of it – for to do that I should have had to draw in the background much more completely, with the figures of James, and Charles, and Hooker,[31] and Laud, and Hyde and Strafford – and an extraordinary period it is – but to arrive at a definition of metaphysical poetry should justify or explain the attribution of this title to this period, and at the same time include other poets of other periods. We start, as I said, in literary criticism with a vague feeling of justice in a definition and of resemblances. Taking them in isolation from each other, those who are familiar with the poetry of the three periods I have treated will easily call any of them "metaphysical." I confess freely to having started from this experience: from having read in the three periods, and having thought of them all as "metaphysical," separately; and of having collocated them when

I was obliged to consider the poetry of the seventeenth century. And the natural result follows. Any definition, such as mine, must be one as much imposed upon the material as derived from it. You must, in part, either cut your definition to suit the material arbitrarily selected or included, as I think does Mr. Saintsbury, or else you must cut your material to suit a definition, or else you must trim and compromise. I have chosen, considering that literary criticism is anything but an exact science, to trim and compromise. To those of you who arrived with a conception of "metaphysical poetry" as a phenomenon of the seventeenth century only, I shall seem to you to have excluded and included too much. Perhaps it is arbitrary to lay down that the seventeenth-century poetry is metaphysical only in so far as it approximates to Donne or to Crashaw or to both. I have taken a name which was hardly more than a collective sign, and I have endeavoured to give it a meaning. In doing so, I have had to neglect, or exclude even, much that is assumed to be metaphysical. But bear in mind that I have not sought to define the poetry of the Jacobean and Caroline period as a whole; that would be another task, and would issue in a definition which would cut across mine of metaphysical poetry. My job has been to define metaphysical poetry in general; its place, past, present and future; by implication to define what may rightly be called metaphysical poetry of the present day in contrast to what may be called metaphysical but is merely conceited; and to establish the place of some of our seventeenth-century poetry in this conception. I have tried to distinguish, in the seventeenth century, the metaphysical from the conceited, and at the same time to indicate the way in which the metaphysical naturally tends to the conceited, and the conceited to the metaphysical – making clear, I hope, that I consider the Italian poetry of the age to be conceited without being metaphysical: the metaphysical at this moment flourished only in England. I have concentrated on Donne and Crashaw because I think that all the other poets usually included can be included under one or the other, or under some crossbreed of both: for these are the two great innovators: the transmitters, the alchemists, of thought into feeling or of feeling into thought. And I have dealt with Cowley merely in order to show how easily the metaphysical poetry transforms itself into the Augustan; as I have tried to show in connection with Donne, how readily the Elizabethan poetical impulse, working on such a mind and with such a training and interest as Donne's, becomes the metaphysical. It is only a step from Chapman's *Ovid's Banquet of Sense* or *Hymn to Night* to Donne; but it is a very long and very important step.[32]

But I must call attention, in closing, to the dilemma which every honest literary critic, now and in the future, will have to face. On the one hand you cannot treat literary criticism as a subject isolated from every other subject of study; you must take account of general history, of philosophy, theology, economics, psychology, into all of which literary criticism merges. And on the other hand you cannot hope to embrace all of the various points of view implied by these various studies: for not only is such encyclopaedic knowledge impossible to any one man, but, even could you attain it, you would have lost the point of view of literary criticism in the process. The literary critic must remain a critic of literature, but he must have sufficient knowledge to understand the points of view of the sciences into which his literary criticism merges. You cannot know your frontiers unless you have some notion of what is beyond them. The only writer who has established a literary criticism which both sticks to the matter in hand and yet implies the other sciences, is of course Aristotle; and the comprehensiveness of Aristotle, in the expanse of modern science and knowledge, is impossible. The literary criticism of Horace, of Boileau, of Dryden, is no longer possible; it is too limited; the literary criticism of Coleridge or of Croce is no longer possible; it is too unlimited.[33] The task for the literary critic of the future is to co-operate with the workers on his frontiers, to understand their work well enough to be able to provide them with material, and to be able to resist the temptation to do their work for them.

In eche estat is litel hertes reste;
God leve us for to take it for the beste![34]

So far, therefore, as I have trespassed on the territory of history, social or political, of theology and religion, of psychology, my criticism of metaphysical poetry has been seriously at fault. What I have tried to do is to maintain literary values in the centre of the picture, to consider different periods of poetry by poetic values, and merely to indicate the extra-literary causes of the differences in literary value. In doing so, I have indicated a theory of what I call the "disintegration of the intellect." So far as I am concerned, this disintegration means merely a progressive deterioration of poetry, in one respect or another, since the thirteenth century. If I am right about poetry, then this deterioration is probably only one aspect of a general deterioration, the other aspects of which should interest workers in other fields. I have had to suggest causes, indicate alterations and tendencies. I have had to refer certain qualities of thirteenth-century Italian poetry

to what, working outward from the poetry, I believe to be the intellectual and emotional organisation of the age; I have had to refer certain peculiarities of phrase, image and poetic feeling of Donne and Crashaw to the political and theological background of their age. But I have criticised, or at least aimed to criticise, nothing but the poetry as poetry. If my observations on the poetic speech of different ages can have any interest for psychologists, occupied with the history of the human mind, so much the better. My views can be utilised, justified, or discredited by students of the subjects which lie outside of literary criticism. Literary criticism cannot provide a gospel, an aesthetic, or a theory of the mind. If I have exalted the thirteenth century, that means only that I am convinced that it produced the best poetry. It does not mean that our best hope of producing great poetry in the future is to reinstate the conditions and beliefs of the thirteenth century. It does mean that if we are to acquire any conscious control over the quality of our poetry, we shall do well to study the conditions under which were produced the poetry of Dante, and of that greatest of English poets, who came soon after him. As I have not, in a series of lectures necessarily compressed and abbreviated, had occasion to mention Chaucer directly, I should like to pay him the tribute of ending with his own ending and invocation –

> Thou oon, and two, and three, eterne on-lyve,
> That regnest ay in three and two and oon,
> Uncircumscript, and al mayst circumscryve,
> Us from visible and invisible foon
> Defende; and to thy mercy, everychoon,
> So make us, Jesus, for thy grace, digne,
> For love of mayde and moder thyn benigne! AMEN.[35]

NOTES

1. Edward Alexander Westermarck (1862-1939), Finnish anthropologist and professor of sociology at the University of London from 1907 to 1930, published *The Origin and Development of Moral Ideas* in 1908; TSE first read the book in Feb 1915 at Oxford, while he was preparing his essay on "The Relativity of the Moral Judgment." An advocate of "ethical subjectivism," Westermarck holds to the emotional origin of all moral concepts and argues that objective or absolute notions of good and evil are illusory because the personal emotions on which they are based fall outside the category of truth.

2. A space in the typescript was left blank for the insertion of a title by George Eliot. TSE probably left the space to check the correct title of "The Sad Fortunes of the Reverend Amos Barton," one of the novellas in *Scenes from Clerical Life* (1858). On 1 Apr 1918, he wrote to his

cousin Eleanor Hinckley that George Eliot "wrote one great story, *Amos Barton*" (*L1* 259). In "A Note on the American Critic," he wrote of "the seriousness which controls 'Amos Barton' and not *The Mill on the Floss*" (289). And in the Introduction to *The Sacred Wood* (1920), he asked, "How astonishing it would be, if a man like Arnold . . . had shown his contemporaries exactly why the author of "Amos Barton" is a more *serious* writer than Dickens, and why the author of *La Chartreuse de Parme* is more serious than either?" (295).

3. In "Baudelaire" (1930), TSE states that Baudelaire's Satanism "amounts to a dim intuition of a part, but a very important part, of Christianity. Satanism itself, so far as not merely an affectation, was an attempt to get into Christianity by the back door" (*SE* 421). (Jules-Amédée Barbey d'Aurevilly, poet and novelist, explored a Catholicism steeped in eroticism, sadism, blasphemy, and occultism in such works as *Un prêtre marié* [*A Married Priest*] (1865) and *Les Diaboliques* [*The She-Devils*] (1874). Huysmans made his excursion into occultism and Satanism in *Là-Bas*. In *Pen, Pencil and Poison* (1889), one of the essays in *Intentions* (1891), Wilde traces the aesthetic career and the casual attitude toward evil of the artist and poisoner Thomas Wainewright.

4†. The following phrase, after the dash, was later excised: "is, with the exception of Hawthorne and Henry James, who are almost equally unappreciated, although admired –"

5. Jean Cocteau's "Scandales" had just appeared in the *Criterion* of Jan 1926, and the English translation of his new collection of essays, *Le Rappel à l'ordre* [*A Call to Order*] was on the spring list at Faber & Gwyer. The Swiss poet Blaise Cendrars (Frédéric Sauser-Hall, 1887-1961), known for his long poem *Les Pâques à New York* [Easter in New York] (1912) and abstract expressionist poems.

6. André Breton (1896-1966), poet, novelist, automatic writer, and one of the founders of the Surrealist movement.

7. Cocteau's *Les Mariés de la Tour Eiffel* [The Wedding on the Eiffel Tower] was first performed on 18 June 1921. The notorious production, described by Cocteau as a "Spectacle," "a sort of secret marriage between Ancient Greek Tragedy and a Christmas Pantomime," satirizes a *petit-bourgeois* wedding party on the newly built Eiffel Tower in the 1890s.

8. Cendrars's *Le Panama* (1918), a surrealistic reverie of his mother's description to him, as a child in Panama, of letters received from her seven brothers in Galveston, Alaska, and other distant places. Breton's *Poisson Soluble* [Soluble Fish], a series of thirty-two surrealistic prose poems depicting imaginary promenades in exotic landscapes, was appended to his *Manifeste du surréalism* [Manifesto of Surrealism] (1924) to exemplify automatic writing.

9. An allusion to the sentimental title poem of *The Bird of Paradise and Other Poems* (London: Methuen, 1914), by the Georgian poet W. H. Davies, in which a prostitute describes the death of her friend, also a prostitute, who cries out in her delirium: "Don't touch that bird of paradise, / Perched on the bed-post there!" (86).

10. Laforgue had been in Berlin for four years as French reader to the Empress Augusta when in 1886 he met and took English lessons from Leah Lee (1861-88), from Teignmouth, Devon, who had served as governess to the Empress Augusta's children. They married in London on 31 Dec and moved to Paris, where Laforgue died of tuberculosis in Aug 1887; Leah died of the disease in St. Peter's Convent, Kilburn, the following June.

11. The first note on Laforgue in English was not by Gosse but by George Moore, whose "Notes and Sensations" appeared in *The Hawk* (23 Sept 1890) and was reprinted as "Two

Unknown Poets" in *Impressions and Opinions* (London: Nutt, 1891): "Their names? – Arthur Rimbaud and Jules Laforgue, names for the first time printed in an English newspaper" (112). TSE may have been thinking of Gosse's *French Profiles*, collected in 1904, but Gosse did not write on Laforgue until 1927, in an essay that elicited TSE's sharp response in the *Criterion* for Sept (1927): "Some protest ought to be raised first against his dismissal of Jules Laforgue and Francis Jammes and Tristan Corbière as 'eccentrics'. . . and second against his statement that 'the interesting French poetry of the end of last century. . . has had practically no influence at all on English metrical writers.' The latter assertion goes to suggest that Sir Edmund Gosse is completely out of touch with modern Poetry" (195).

12. TSE's translation (and parenthetical insertion) from "Hamlet" in *Moralités légendaires*, included in volume I of the two-volume edition in his library (signed 'Thomas Eliot 1909') of *Œuvres complètes de Jules Laforgue*, 4th ed. (Paris: Mercure de France, 1909), 69, 72.

> – . . . si vous n'étiez un pauvre dément, irresponsable selon les derniers progrès de la science, vous paieriez à l'instant la mort de mon honorable père et celle de ma sœur, cette jeune fille accomplie . . .
> – O Laërtes, tout m'est égal. Mais soyez sûr que je prendrai votre point de vue en considération . . .
> – Juste ciel, quelle absence de sens moral!
> . . . . On envoya chercher le cadavre avec des flambeaux de première qualité.

13. *Trans*: "In short, I was going to treat myself to an 'I love you' when I realised, but not without trouble, that in the first place I was not really in possession of myself"; from "Dimanches" [Sundays] (III), ll. 1-3, *Derniers Vers* (1890), in TSE's copy of *Œuvres complètes*, 1, 297; trans. Michael Collie, *Laforgue* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1963), 116.

14. "Dimanches" (III), line 7: *trans*: "only believes in his Self in moments of loss"; trans. Michael Collie, *Laforgue*, 116.

15. *Trans*: "Am I not a false chord [?]" From Baudelaire's "L'Héautontimorouménos" [The Self-Tormentor], line 13; *read:* "Ne suis-je pas un faux accord"

Trans: "God!, give me the strength and courage to contemplate my heart and my body without disgust"; the last lines of Baudelaire's "Un Voyage à Cythère" [Voyage to Cythera]; *read*: "Seigneur! donnez-moi la force et le courage / De contempler mon coeur et mon corps sans dégoût!"

TSE refers to the first stanza of Emerson's "Brahma": "If the red slayer think he slays, / Or if the slain think he is slain, / They know not well the subtle ways / I keep, and pass, and turn again." He had explicitly connected Emerson's poem and a phrase from "L'Héautontimorouménos" in a 1918 review: "It is our old acquaintance, the Red Slayer, *la plaie et le couteau!*" (1.726).

16. *Trans*: "Oh, with what pleasure I'd wring them, this precious body and this tenor heart . . . No, no! That's to suck the flesh of a chosen spirit, to adore incurable organs . . . And it's not her flesh that would be everything for me. And for her I'd be more than a large-hearted man . . . The spirit and the flesh, the flesh and the spirit – it is the proud spirit of the Garden of Eden to be something of a Man with Woman . . . Come, last of poets, if you're always shut up, you will make yourself ill. See, it's a fine day, everyone's outside. Then go and buy a pennyworth of hellebore. It will give you a little walk." From "Dimanches" (III), stanzas 9, 10, 11 and 13 (299-300); trans. Collie, *Laforgue*, 116-17.

17. *Trans*: "The inviolable and frail Young Girls"; "I do not go to church not I! / I'm the High Chancellor of Analysis"; "Dimanches" (IV), 301-02; trans. Collie, *Laforgue*, 114.

18. After he went to Germany in 1881, Laforgue was influenced by Arthur Schopenhauer, and particularly by his disciple, Eduard von Hartmann (1842-1906), whose *Philosophie de l'inconscient* [Philosophy of the Unconscious] (1869) provided the poet with terms such as *le néant* [nothingness], *l'absolu* [the absolute], *l'inconscient* [the unconscious].

In stanza seven of "Dimanches" (III), immediately preceding the elided stanzas quoted above (see n. 16), the persona cries: "À moi, Walkyries! / Walkyries des hypocondries et des tueries!" ["Come to me Walkyries, Walkyries of hypochondria and slaughter!"]; trans. Collie, *Laforgue*, 116. In Germanic mythology, the Valkyries were warrior-maidens who presided over the battlefield, selecting the Victorious warriors and escorting the fallen to Valhalla. Wagner gave the Valkyries a prominent role in his *Die Walküre* (1854-56).

19. Wagner's music drama, *Tristan und Isolde*, was first produced in Munich in 1865. TSE quoted verses from Act I in Part I of *TWL* and referred to it in his "Notes" to the poem.

20. TSE translates lines 41-51 from Laforgue's prose poem, "Grande complainte de la ville de Paris" [Great Complaint of the City of Paris], written in Aug 1884 and published in his first book, *Les Complaintes* (1885): "Mais les cris publics reprennent. Avis important! l'Amortissable a fléchi, ferme le Panama. Enchères, experts. Avances sur titres cotés ou non cotés, achats de nu-propriétés, de viagers, d'usufruit; avances sur successions ouvertes et autres; indicateurs, annuaires, étrennes. Voyages circulaires à prix réduits. Madame Ludovic prédit l'avenir de 2 à 4. Jouets *Au Paradis des enfants* et accessoires pour cotillons aux grandes personnes. Grand choix de principes à l'épreuve. Encore des cris! Seul dépôt! soupers de centième! Machines cylindriques Marinoni! Tout garanti, tout pour rien! Ah! la rapidité de la vie aussi seul depot . . . . *Œuvres complètes*, I, 178.

21. In "Dante" (1929), TSE later wrote of the treaty between the Allies and Germany that ended World War I, signed at the Palace of Versailles on 28 June 1919: "It is not particularly the Treaty of Versailles that has separated nation from nation; nationalism was born long before; and the process of disintegration which for our generation culminates in that treaty began soon after Dante's time" (*SE* 240).

22. TSE alludes to the tenth of the twelve poems in *Derniers Vers*: "Ô géraniums diaphanes, guerroyeurs sortilèges" ["Diaphanous geraniums, warrior spells"], which he previously quoted in "The Metaphysical Poets" as a poem that employs "a method curiously similar to that of the 'metaphysical poets,' similar also in its use of obscure words and of simple phrasing" (381-82).

23. Marvell, "The Garden," line 48; *read*: "To a green thought in a green shade."

24. Marvell, from "Chlorinda and Damon," line 15; Muses' Library edition, 41. TSE quoted the full question ("Might a soul bathe there and be clean, / Or slake its drought?") in "Andrew Marvell" (1921), where he finds that "a metaphor has suddenly rapt us to the image of spiritual purgation" (316), and again in "Andrew Marvell" (1923), where he describes them as "a conceit of the very finest order . . . Our pleasure is in the suddenness of the transference from material to spiritual water" (456).

25. TSE translates lines 137-38 from Corbière's "La Rapsode foraine et le Pardon de Sainte-Anne" [The Travelling Minstrel and the Pardon of Saint Anne], which appeared in *Les Amours jaunes* [The Yellow Loves] (1873). In "Modern Tendencies in Poetry" (1920) he wrote of this passage: "the phrase burns itself in like the *cotto aspetto* of Dante's Brunetto Latini" (217). He

had chosen two preceding lines (113-14) in the poem as the original epigraph for "Sweeney Erect" (*IMH* 356). TSE quotes from the "Édition definitive" that he owned (Paris: Albert Messein, 1912), with a preface by Charles Le Goffic.

26. "Petit Mort Pour Rire" ["A Little Death to Make One Laugh"] (Corbière's ellipses), one of six poems under the heading "Rondels pour après" [Rondels for Afterwards] in *Les Amours jaunes*, 293; trans. C. F. MacIntyre, *Selections from Les Amours jaunes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1954), 195:

> Go quickly, nimble comber of comets!
> The wind-blown grass will be your poll;
> elf-fires will flash from your hollow sockets,
> prisoners in the sorry skulls . . .
>
> the flowers of the grave called Amourettes
> will swell your earthy laughter full . . .
> and forget-me-nots, flowers of oubliettes . . .
>
> Don't make it heavy: coffins for poets
> are easy for hired mutes to follow,
> fiddle-boxes that sound hollow . . .
> they'll think you are dead – the bourgeois are fools –
> go quickly, nimble comber of comets!

27. "Lettre du Mexique" [Letter from Mexico], in which an old soldier reports to a relative in Toulon the death by fever of a young sailor in Veracruz, appeared in the section titled "Gens de mer" [Seafarers] in the second edition of *Les Amour jaunes* (1891).

28. In "Swinburne as Critic" (1919) TSE pointed out the "striking affinity" between Chapman and Donne as metaphysical poets (118), an affinity he reaffirmed in "The Metaphysical Poets": "In Chapman especially there is a direct sensuous apprehension of thought, or a recreation of thought into feeling, which is exactly what we find in Donne" (379).

29. From the Duke of Byron's speech in *The Conspiracie and Tragedie of Charles Duke of Byron* (1608), III.iii.135; *read*: "Give me a spirit that on this life's rough sea." As printed in TSE's Mermaid edition, *George Chapman*, ed. William Lyon Phelps (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1895), 372.

30. Rousseau was, with Quesnay, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Turgot, and other *philosophes*, a contributor to the twenty-eight volume *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (1751-72) edited by Diderot and d'Alembert.

31. Though TSE does not draw upon Hooker's *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* after recommending it as a source book at the end of Lecture I, he discusses its importance later in 1926 in "Lancelot Andrewes," where he asserts that "The intellectual achievement and the prose style of Hooker and Andrewes came to complete the structure of the English Church as the philosophy of the thirteenth century crowns the Catholic Church" (818).

32. Chapman's "Hymnus in Noctem" is a part of the poem titled *The Shadow of Night* (1594), which celebrates the intellectual and contemplative faculties as they are affected by the mysterious stimuli of night. It preceded his *Ovid's Banquet of Sense* (1595), which celebrates Ovid's feast of the five senses and their sublimation into spiritual ecstasy when he observes his

Corinna bathing. Both are included in TSE's copy of *The Works of George Chapman: Poems and Minor Translations* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1904), with an introduction by Swinburne.

33. Benedetto Croce was author of several volumes of aesthetic criticism, including *Estetica come scienza dell'espressione e linguistica generale* [*Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic*] (1902; trans. 1909) and *Breviario di estetica* [*The Breviary of Aesthetic*] (1913; trans. 1915). TSE likely also read Croce's *The Poetry of Dante* (1922) and published an English translation of his "Sulla natura dell'allegoria" (1922) as "On the Nature of Allegory" in the Apr 1925 issue of the *Criterion*.

34. *Troilus and Criseyde*, Book V, ll. 1749-50, as printed in TSE's annotated copy (Houghton) of *The Student's Chaucer*, ed. Walter W. Skeat (New York: Oxford UP, 1894), 323.

35. The concluding stanza of *Troilus and Criseyde*, Book V, ll. 1863-70, as printed in *The Student's Chaucer*, 325. Shortly before his first Clark lecture, TSE wrote to Mario Praz about Praz's essay on Chaucer and Italy: "Far too little has been written about Chaucer in this country and there are very few scholars, I fear, capable of dealing with this subject" (*L3* 24). TSE's remarks in "Chaucer's 'Troilus,'" written later in 1926, illuminate his choice of Chaucer's poem to conclude the Clark Lectures: "It may be said without exaggeration that *Troilus and Criseyde* is a document second in importance, in its kind, only to the *Vita Nuova*. It is a pendant to the latter, and the two are perfectly consistent" (809).

THE CLARK LECTURES: TEXTUAL NOTES

Location: Hayward Bequest, Modern Archives Centre (King's); shelfmark: P6; typescript of eight lectures, Lecture I-VIII, otherwise untitled; dated 1926 on title page; 186 leaves with holograph emendations and marginal comments by TSE, Herbert Read, Mario Praz, and other unidentified hands; epigraph page lost in circulation of typescript; watermark, textual pages: Plantagenet / British Make (20.2 x 25.9 cm); watermark, preliminary pages: Colindia Parchment (20.2 x 25.4 cm). Each separate lecture consecutively numbered in type in the middle of the top margin, with page [1] of each lecture unnumbered; TSE began numbering the pages consecutively (26-184) in his hand, after cancelling page 26 (containing the list of recommended books) of the first lecture; later dedicated and signed by hand "to / John Hayward / privately, confidentially / and in humility / T. S. Eliot."

Carbon copy (Houghton); shelfmark: MS Am 1691.14 (45); on unmarked paper (20.3 x 25.5 cm); epigraph page present. A blank leaf of "Plantagenet," used for the text of the top copy, has been inserted between lectures V and VI, with blank carbon leaves inserted between succeeding lectures; numbered consecutively in pencil 1-188 in lower left corner of each page, beginning with the title page but excluding the inserted blank leaves. Typographical errors have been corrected or marked in ink and in graphite and orange pencils by various hands, but there is insufficient evidence to determine whether TSE made any of the corrections before sending the copy "as they were delivered" to his mother on 22 Aug 1927 (*L3* 646); no textual or marginal comments by any reader, with the exception of one word, "form," in an unidentified hand, to suggest a word dropped by the typist in Lecture II.

The lectures were typed by the firm of "Miss Haye, Typewriting, Duplicating, and Facsimile Printing," 48 St. Martin's Lane, London WC2, and invoiced for £4 on 30 Mar 1926 for "typing Manuscript (8 lectures) comprising approximately 40,000 words (with one carbon copy)." TSE's original TS/MS used for delivering the lectures was subsequently destroyed. Some

Corinna bathing. Both are included in TSE's copy of *The Works of George Chapman: Poems and Minor Translations* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1904), with an introduction by Swinburne.

33. Benedetto Croce was author of several volumes of aesthetic criticism, including *Estetica come scienza dell'espressione e linguistica generale* [*Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic*] (1902; trans. 1909) and *Breviario di estetica* [*The Breviary of Aesthetic*] (1913; trans. 1915). TSE likely also read Croce's *The Poetry of Dante* (1922) and published an English translation of his "Sulla natura dell'allegoria" (1922) as "On the Nature of Allegory" in the Apr 1925 issue of the *Criterion*.

34. *Troilus and Criseyde*, Book V, ll. 1749-50, as printed in TSE's annotated copy (Houghton) of *The Student's Chaucer*, ed. Walter W. Skeat (New York: Oxford UP, 1894), 323.

35. The concluding stanza of *Troilus and Criseyde*, Book V, ll. 1863-70, as printed in *The Student's Chaucer*, 325. Shortly before his first Clark lecture, TSE wrote to Mario Praz about Praz's essay on Chaucer and Italy: "Far too little has been written about Chaucer in this country and there are very few scholars, I fear, capable of dealing with this subject" (*L3* 24). TSE's remarks in "Chaucer's 'Troilus,'" written later in 1926, illuminate his choice of Chaucer's poem to conclude the Clark Lectures: "It may be said without exaggeration that *Troilus and Criseyde* is a document second in importance, in its kind, only to the *Vita Nuova*. It is a pendant to the latter, and the two are perfectly consistent" (809).

THE CLARK LECTURES: TEXTUAL NOTES

Location: Hayward Bequest, Modern Archives Centre (King's); shelfmark: P6; typescript of eight lectures, Lecture I-VIII, otherwise untitled; dated 1926 on title page; 186 leaves with holograph emendations and marginal comments by TSE, Herbert Read, Mario Praz, and other unidentified hands; epigraph page lost in circulation of typescript; watermark, textual pages: Plantagenet / British Make (20.2 x 25.9 cm); watermark, preliminary pages: Colindia Parchment (20.2 x 25.4 cm). Each separate lecture consecutively numbered in type in the middle of the top margin, with page [1] of each lecture unnumbered; TSE began numbering the pages consecutively (26-184) in his hand, after cancelling page 26 (containing the list of recommended books) of the first lecture; later dedicated and signed by hand "to / John Hayward / privately, confidentially / and in humility / T. S. Eliot."

Carbon copy (Houghton); shelfmark: MS Am 1691.14 (45); on unmarked paper (20.3 x 25.5 cm); epigraph page present. A blank leaf of "Plantagenet," used for the text of the top copy, has been inserted between lectures V and VI, with blank carbon leaves inserted between succeeding lectures; numbered consecutively in pencil 1-188 in lower left corner of each page, beginning with the title page but excluding the inserted blank leaves. Typographical errors have been corrected or marked in ink and in graphite and orange pencils by various hands, but there is insufficient evidence to determine whether TSE made any of the corrections before sending the copy "as they were delivered" to his mother on 22 Aug 1927 (*L3* 646); no textual or marginal comments by any reader, with the exception of one word, "form," in an unidentified hand, to suggest a word dropped by the typist in Lecture II.

The lectures were typed by the firm of "Miss Haye, Typewriting, Duplicating, and Facsimile Printing," 48 St. Martin's Lane, London WC2, and invoiced for £4 on 30 Mar 1926 for "typing Manuscript (8 lectures) comprising approximately 40,000 words (with one carbon copy)." TSE's original TS/MS used for delivering the lectures was subsequently destroyed. Some

missing quotations of passages, read from texts at hand during the lectures, were not supplied to the typist. The fair copy was speed-typed and delivered unproofed, with dropped words, misreadings, and many lines running to the extreme edge of the right margin.

The lectures were first edited and published in *The Varieties of Metaphysical Poetry*: *The Clark Lectures at Trinity College, Cambridge, 1926, and the Turnbull Lectures at The Johns Hopkins University, 1933*, ed. Ronald Schuchard (London: Faber and Faber, 1993; New York: Harcourt Brace, 1994). In that edition, the texts were edited as closely as possible to the lectures as delivered by TSE, with emendations recorded (pages 299-304). For this edition, the texts have been re-edited as closely as possible to the lectures as subsequently revised by TSE, with substantive canceled phrases, sentences, and passages indicated in the notes. Foreign words not in set-off quotations, and the titles of books, plays, and long poems, often given without punctuation, have been italicized; TSE's typed underlinings for emphasis in delivery have been preserved as such. Minor mistranscriptions of poetic texts have been corrected to the editions identified and used by TSE. Misquotations from memory have been preserved in the text and corrected in the notes.

The titles for the lectures have been taken or adapted from TSE's projected titles for his proposed revision of the lectures, as pencilled on the verso of page 183 of the typescript (Lecture VIII, penultimate page):

1. Introduction on the Definition of metaphysical poetry.
2. Donne & middle ages:
   a. Donne's supposed mediaevalism
   b. Contrast with Trecento
3. The Conceit in Donne
4. His Longer Poems
5. The Religion of XVII Century
   (Donne's Relation to Elizabethan Drama?)
   Chapman. Compare with
6. Crashaw.
7. A Note on George Herbert
   Vaughan & Traherne
8. Cowley & the Transition
9. Summary & Comparison: XIX C.
   Appendix: the ultra-conceited: Cleveland and Benlowes.

On the verso of the final page (TSE's 184), there are three groups of lecture and page notes. The first group was evidently made by Herbert Read, as the page numbers for Lectures I and II, and possibly III, corespond to the queries and corrections made in his hand: I: p. 10, 14; II: p. 22; III: p. 9

The second group is in TSE's hand, where he has made page notes on his theme of the disintegration of the intellect: "Disintegration": V–16, 17 & end; VI–22; VII 2-3

The final entry is again in TSE's hand: a reference to his discussion of the fields of knowledge required of the literary critic: VIII 19 as to the knowledge of the other studies required

Geoffrey Faber read the lectures after he nominated TSE for a research fellowship at All Souls, Oxford, in Apr-May 1926 (*L3* 136). On 21 June, TSE wrote to Professor H. J. C. Grierson

that he had "lent the manuscript to a friend in London for his opinion, but will profit by your kind permission to send you some part as soon as he returns it. At the same time, I must say emphatically that I *dread* your inspection of my manuscript in its present form. It represents lectures as they were delivered and most of it was written in circumstances of great difficulty; it is full of hasty generalisations, unsubstantiated statements and unverified references; there are great gaps in my knowledge which ought to be filled; and the style is abominable" (*L3* 190-91). Herbert Read and Mario Praz read and commented on the lectures later in 1926 and early in 1927. On 10 Dec 1928, TSE wrote again to Professor Grierson that he still hoped to get his Donne book off, "which I hope will be early in the spring. Which reminds me to remind you of your promise to read and criticise a few chapters of it in manuscript, when they are ready" (*L4* 351). On 19 June 1935, however, he reported to Praz, who asked about them: "I never republished my Clark Lectures at Cambridge and I have no intention of doing so. I may have changed my mind on many points, and I am certainly conscious of having written outside of my actual knowledge. I used some of the material in a series of three lectures given in Baltimore, but I have not republished these, and have no intention of doing so. The point is that to rewrite the Clark Lectures in any form which would be now acceptable to me would be an immense labour and I am now more interested in doing other things and writing about other subjects." The top copy of the lectures was eventually placed in the care of John Hayward's "Eliot Archives" when the two took a flat together at 19 Carlyle Mansions, Chelsea, in Feb 1946. The lectures remained in Hayward's possession after TSE's marriage to Valerie Fletcher in 1957. Upon Hayward's death on 17 Sept 1965, nine months after TSE's death on 5 Jan, they became part of the Hayward Bequest to King's College. The carbon copy was eventually placed in Eliot House by Henry Ware Eliot in Nov 1936; it was permanently transferred to the Houghton in the summer of 1951.

For a full historical account of TSE's Clark Lectures, see the "Editor's Introduction" to *The Varieties of Metaphysical Poetry* (1-31).

The Idea of a Literary Review[1]

The New Criterion: A Quarterly Review, 4 (Jan 1926) 1-6

The existence of a literary review requires more than a word of justification. It is not enough to present a list of distinguished contributors; it is not enough to express a cordial zeal for the diffusion of good literature; it is not enough to define a "policy." The essential preliminary is to define the task to be attempted, and the place which may be occupied, by any literary review; to define the nature and the function. Many reviews and periodicals qualified as "literary" have proved deficient not so much by their failure to carry out their purposes as by their failure to conceive these purposes and possibilities clearly. This note, therefore, will be concerned less with the point of view of *The New Criterion*, compared with that of other reviews, than with the definition of the literary review in general, and the precise application of the term "literature" in such a periodical.

There are two pairs of opposed errors, into which a "literary review" may fall. It may err by being too comprehensive in its selection of contributors, or by being too narrow. Or it may err by including too much material and representing too many interests, which are not strictly literary, or on the other hand by sticking too closely to a narrow conception of literature. It is obvious that most literary periodicals follow one of these four deviations, which I shall call for convenience 1 (*a*) and (*b*), and 2 (*a*) and (*b*); and that it is possible for a periodical to exhibit one error out of each pair.

1 (*a*). The review which makes up its contents merely of what the editor considers "good stuff" will obviously have the character of a miscellany, and no other character whatever, except the feeble reflection of the character of a feeble editor. To miscellanies which acknowledge their nature I raise no objection; there is a place for such publications, but they are not reviews. A review which depends merely on its editor's vague perceptions of "good" and "bad" has manifestly no critical value. A review should be an organ of documentation. That is to say, the bound volumes of a decade should represent the development of the keenest sensibility and the clearest thought of ten years. Even a single number should attempt to illustrate, within its limits, the time and the tendencies of the time. It should have a

value over and above the aggregate value of the individual contributions. Its contents should exhibit heterogeneity which the intelligent reader can resolve into order. The apparent heterogeneity of the present number of *The New Criterion* is, therefore, not without a plan – at least an intention.

1 (*b*). The miscellaneous review is negative: the review which propagates the ideas of a single man, or the views and fancies of a small group, is more evidently obnoxious. In the realm of action, of political or theological controversy, a small and compact body of troops, or even a single leader, may accomplish useful work. But in the world of ideas, no individual, no small group, is ever good enough or wise enough to deserve such licence. Of messianic literature we have sufficient.

From what has been said it should appear that the ideal literary review will depend upon a nice adjustment between editor, collaborators and occasional contributors. Such an adjustment must issue in a "tendency" rather than a "programme." A programme is a fragile thing, the more dogmatic the more fragile. An editor or a collaborator may change his mind; internal discord breaks out; and there is an end to the programme or to the group. But a tendency will endure, unless editor and collaborators change not only their minds but their personalities. Editor and collaborators may freely express their individual opinions and ideas, so long as there is a residue of common tendency, in the light of which many occasional contributors, otherwise irrelevant or even antagonistic, may take their place and counteract any narrow sectarianism.

2 (*a*) and (*b*). The solution of the second dilemma – that of being either too general or too strictly "literary" – involves a working notion of the term "literature." Too wide an inclusion of subject matter is a fault similar to that of indiscriminate inclusion of contributors and needs no further elucidation. The vice of making a review too narrowly literary is not so evident. On the contrary, many readers have criticised *The Criterion* for not being literary enough. But I have seen the birth and death of several purely literary periodicals; and I say of all of them that in isolating the concept of literature they destroy the life of literature. It is not merely that there is not enough good literature, even good second-rate literature, to fill the pages of *any* review; or that in a purely literary review the work of a man of genius may appear almost side by side with some miserable counterfeit of his own style. The profounder objection is the impossibility of defining the frontiers, or limiting the context of "literature." Even the purest literature is alimented from non-literary sources, and has non-literary consequences.

Pure literature is a chimera of sensation; admit the vestige of an idea and it is already transformed.

We must then take the vague but quite adequate concept of literature as the beautiful expression of particular sensation and perception, general emotion and impersonal ideas, merely as the centre from which we move; and form a literary review, not merely on literature, but on what we may suppose to be the interests of any intelligent person with literary taste. We will not include irrelevant information, subjects of technical and limited interest, or subjects of current political and economic controversy. We must include besides "creative" work and literary criticism, any material which should be operative on general ideas – the results of contemporary work in history, archaeology, anthropology, even of the more technical sciences when those results are of such a nature to be valuable to the man of general culture and when they can be made intelligible to him. In such a structure we must include – the statement ought to be superfluous – the work of continental writers of the same order of merit as our own; and especially the writers who ought to be known in England, rather than those whose work is already accepted here. And here again, as in the choice of authors, our catholicity must be ordered and rational, not heterogene and miscellaneous. Above all the literary review – which might be called a review of general ideas, except that such a designation emphasises the intellectual at the expense of the sensational and emotional elements – must protect its disinterestedness, must avoid the temptation ever to appeal to any social, political or theological prejudices.

Such, then, are the principles which I hold to be valid for any literary review; many other reviews than *The New Criterion* might be formed on these principles. As for *The New Criterion* itself, I have expressed my aversion to stating any programme or erecting any platform. But it might not be amiss to clarify by illustration the notion of a "tendency." Here the reader must take warning. Even in indicating a tendency – far from formulating a programme – I must perforce falsify. I cannot help substituting personal tendencies for those which are impersonal and existing in the outside world. But from this dilemma there is no escape, and the reader must make his own reserves and deductions accordingly. I believe that the modern tendency is toward something which, for want of a better name, we may call classicism. I use the term with hesitation, for it is hardly more than analogical: we must scrupulously guard ourselves against measuring living art and mind by dead laws of order. Art reflects the transitory as well as the

permanent condition of the soul; we cannot wholly measure the present by what the past has been, or by what we think the future ought to be. Yet there is a tendency – discernable even in art – toward a higher and clearer conception of Reason, and a more severe and serene control of the emotions by Reason. If this approaches or even suggests the Greek ideal, so much the better: but it must inevitably be very different. I will mention a few books, not all very recent, which to my mind exemplify this tendency:

Réflexions sur la violence, by Georges Sorel; *L'Avenir de l'intelligence*, by Charles Maurras; *Belphégor*, by Julien Benda; *Speculations*, by T. E. Hulme; *Réflexions sur l'intelligence*, by Jacques Maritain; *Democracy and Leadership*, by Irving Babbitt.[2] Anyone who is acquainted with two or more of these books will understand my use of the word "tendency," for the theories and points of view are extremely divergent. And against this group of books I will set another group of books, more accidental, it is true, but all recently received, which represent to my mind that part of the present which is already dead:

Christina Alberta's Father, by H. G. Wells; *St. Joan*,[3*] by Bernard Shaw; and *What I Believe*,[4*] by Bertrand Russell.[5] (I am sorry to include the name of Mr. Russell, whose intellect would have reached the first rank even in the thirteenth century, but when he trespasses outside of mathematical philosophy his excursions are often descents.) Between these writers there are many and great differences, as between the others. And they all have their moments: at one point in his novel Mr. Wells lapses from vulgarity into high seriousness; at two points, if not more, in his long series of plays Mr. Shaw reveals himself as the artist whose development was checked at puberty. But they all hold curious amateur religions[6*] based apparently upon amateur or second-hand biology, and on *The Way of all Flesh*.[7] They all exhibit intelligence at the mercy of emotion. They all, it is true, have their faith. It is not for us to sneer at the faith of those who were born and reared under conditions different from ours – perhaps more difficult – perhaps easier. But we must find our own faith, and having found it, fight for it against all others. And with this I will make no more ado of tendencies.

NOTES

1. This was the introductory essay to the first issue of *The New Criterion*, jointly supported by the patron of the original *Criterion*, Lady Rothermere (whose three-year publishing

contract with Richard Cobden-Sanderson was ending) and the publishing firm Faber and Gwyer, where TSE had taken a new position on the board of directors late in 1925. The present issue was the first since July 1925, due in part to negotiations over the journal's future and in part to TSE's unexpected medical leave in France; it was composed primarily of the contents of the postponed Oct 1925 number. The present essay was completed by 9 Jan 1926 (*L3* 7).

2. TSE reviewed Hulme's translation of Sorel's *Réflexions* (1908) in 1917 and taught it in his first series of Extension lectures (1.558, 1.476). He taught Charles Maurras's *L'Avenir de l'intelligence* (1905) in the same lectures and mentioned him frequently thereafter, telling Robert Graves on 2 Nov 1925, "After I have finished my Cambridge lectures I must try to write a book on Charles Maurras" (*L2* 768). He first mentioned Benda's *Belphégor* (1918) in "A French Romantic" and praised it repeatedly thereafter, especially in "The French Intelligence" (275, 291). Hulme's *Speculations* he discussed in a *Criterion* "Commentary" in Apr 1924 (521). Maritain's *Réflexions sur l'intelligence et sur sa vie propre* (1924) struck him as valuable yet disappointing (*L2* 796). He later discussed Babbitt's *Democracy and Leadership* (1924) in "The Humanism of Irving Babbitt," *Forum*, 80 (July 1928), [37]-44.

3*. TSE's note: "Two new books about Mr. Shaw, *Table Talk of G. B. S.*, by Archibald Henderson (Chapman & Hall, 5/- net.), and *Shaw*, by J. S. Collis (Cape, 5/- net), should have been reviewed, but for lack of space. They are of no great value, but show that *l'on porte partout le cadavre de son grand-père*."

Trans: You carry around your grandfather's corpse everywhere. TSE modifies Guillaume Apollinaire's aphorism from *Les Peintres cubistes* [The Cubist Painters] (1913): "On ne peut pas transporter partout avec soi le cadavre de son père." ["No one can carry his father's body about everywhere with him"] Trans. Mary Knoblauch, *The Little Review*, 8 (Spring 1922), 8. Pound had quoted the line in "Vorticism" (1914): "We are all futurists to the extent of believing with Guillaume Apollinaire that 'On ne peut pas porter *partout* avec soi le cadavre de son père.'" In *Gaudier-Brzeska* (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1916), 111.

Both *Table-Talk of G. B. S.: Conversations on Things in General between Bernard Shaw and his Biographer* by Archibald Henderson (1877-1963) and *Shaw* by John Stewart Collis (1900-84) appeared in 1925.

4*. TSE's note: "This admirable pamphlet, the most interesting so far of a pert little series (Kegan Paul), is a complete credo of die-hard radicalism. It deserves very full attention, but, as with other dogmatic revelations, an adequate commentary would much exceed in length the document commented upon."

5. Wells, *Christina Alberta's Father* (1925); Shaw, *St. Joan: A Chronicle Play in Six Scenes and an Epilogue* (1924); *What I Believe* (1925) was Russell's second contribution to Kegan Paul's popular "To-day and To-morrow" pamphlet series, launched late in 1923.

6*. TSE's note: "Very different from the religion of Mr. Middleton Murry, which I am totally unable to understand."

Murry responded to the present essay – in part by suggesting that the contradictions inherent in TSE's classicist position could only be reconciled "by an act of violence, by joining the Catholic Church" – in "The 'Classical' Revival," a two-part essay upon which TSE commented copiously in typescript. It appeared in the *Adelphi*, 3 (Feb 1926), 585-95 and (Mar 1926), 648-53.

7. Samuel Butler wrote *The Way of All Flesh* (1903) while he was publishing his speculative theories of biology and evolution in works such as *Life and Habit* (1878) and *Evolution, Old and New* (1879), in which he argued that evolution was ultimately guided by purposive direction rather than random adaptations. TSE lectured on Butler's novel and on the influence of his theories on Shaw in his Extension lectures (1.590).

A Popular Shakespeare

An unsigned review of *The Works of Shakespeare*. Volume I: Comedies. Volume II: Histories. Volume III: Tragedies Introductions by Charles Whibley

London: Macmillan, 1926.

Times Literary Supplement, 1255 (4 Feb 1926) 76

Of this popular edition of Shakespeare the text is that of the Globe Shakespeare of Clark and Wright;[1] there is no commentary or gloss; but a glossary. Comment, therefore, is restricted to the production of the book by Messrs. Macmillan and to the three introductions by Mr. Whibley.[2] The arrangement of the plays under the categories of tragedies, histories, and comedies is, in a popular edition, justifiable. Nevertheless, it creates inevitable confusions, and must have somewhat hampered Mr. Whibley in the preparation of his prefaces, each of which is written for the plays in the volume to which it is prefixed. One is somewhat bewildered at finding *Pericles* and *Cymbeline* among the "Tragedies," at reading Mr. Whibley's delightful and understanding comments on *Julius Caesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra* in his preface to "Tragedies," and wondering why there is no reference to *Coriolanus*, which we subsequently find with *Troilus and Cressida* among the "Histories"! But such arbitrary division, for which we do not suppose Mr. Whibley to be responsible, but to which we suppose rather that he had to accommodate himself, is perhaps right in a popular edition; and perhaps any other principle of division into three volumes would have been difficult for the public mind to grasp. We must recognize, in any case, that it has made matters difficult for Mr. Whibley. What has still further encumbered him is the illustrations, provided with inadequate explanation and extenuation, and mostly drawn from the work of antiquated artists. What we have to consider is what Mr. Whibley has performed in the special circumstances of this edition.

There are millions of people who can and do read Shakespeare as Shakespeare – and amongst these millions are included all of those educated and even cultivated persons who, whatever their erudition, are not concerned with influences, derivations and collaborations. It is certain that

the number of plays included in the popular Shakespeare canon has a unity whoever was or were the authors; and it is probable that most people will profit most by reading this body of work as a whole – if they can be induced to read it at all – without bothering by whom or by how many persons it was actually written. It is therefore desirable that there should be an edition of Shakespeare – like this edition – in which neither prefaces nor notes should cast a shadow of doubt upon the authorship. Is anyone, however erudite or cultivated in other respects (for we cannot all be Shakespeare scholars), competent to advance to such a work as Mr. Robertson's *Shakespeare Canon* or similar works until he has assimilated the plays attributed to Shakespeare as if they were all written and altogether written by one man?[3] Mr. Robertson writes for the Shakespearian; the present edition is for the man who is not yet a Shakespearian. With this distinction in mind, we can praise ungrudgingly Mr. Whibley's prefaces. For a popular edition they are, when examined closely, wholly admirable. He follows the method which is the method most useful for those for whom an "introduction" is desirable. He selects the most important plays of each type, outlines their plots, and calls attention to their beauties. He refrains from indulging in any esoteric theories as to their meaning or significance; he restricts himself to pointing out what, from any point of view, will be their principal excellences. Everybody, except a very small number of technical and philosophical specialists, is a beginner in Shakespeare, and everyone, with the possible exception of these specialists, can profit by Mr. Whibley's wise and sane introductions.

There is only one point upon which we are inclined to exercise caution: that is upon Mr. Whibley's views of Shakespeare's political convictions. Shakespeare may have been, and very probably was, in practice a Conservative in politics. But is the lesson to be drawn from such a play as *Coriolanus* the lesson that democracy leads to anarchy, the lesson of the perfect type of the aristocrat? We might like to believe that Shakespeare had in mind anything so positive. But it is possible to draw another conclusion: the conclusion that Shakespeare was as conscious of the faults and vices of the "aristocrat" as he was of those of the plebs, and that the only inference to be drawn from Shakespeare is, in the words of Mr. Santayana, the truth that "Duncan is in his grave."[4]

NOTES

1. The Globe Edition of *The Works of William Shakespeare*, edited by W. G. Clark (1821-78) and W. A. Wright (1831-1914) first appeared in 1864 and was frequently reprinted.

2. TSE had reviewed Charles Whibley's *Literary Studies* in 1919 (176) and corresponded with him regularly since publishing his two-part essay on Bolingbroke in the *Criterion* in 1923. In 1925, Whibley recommended TSE for the position on the Editorial Board at Faber & Gwyer, which he assumed at the end of the year.

3. J. M. Robertson, renowned for his extreme "disintegrationist" theories that cast doubt on Shakespeare's sole authorship of a number of plays, published *The Shakespeare Canon* in 1922. TSE reviewed his *The Problem of "Hamlet"* in 1919 (122).

4. TSE likely refers to "The Absence of Religion in Shakespeare" in *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900). There Santayana argues that Shakespeare was indifferent to the religious significance of life, although he does not refer to Macbeth's statement that "Duncan is in his grave, / After life's fitful fever he sleeps well" (III.ii.22-23) but to lines from his soliloquy on hearing of the Queen's death, "To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow . . . Signifying nothing" (V.vi.19-28).

Introduction

Savonarola: A Dramatic Poem, by Charlotte Eliot[1]

London: R. Cobden-Sanderson, 1926. Pp. xv + 99; Introduction, vii-xii.

I. OF HISTORY AND TRUTH

Accuracy is no justification of a work of historical fiction, though the lack of accuracy is a serious blemish. Such fiction, whether in prose or verse, must find its excuse in the same qualities as any other work of fiction, in vitality, order and grace. But historical fiction, to the degree to which it possesses these merits, has a documentary value of another kind than that possible to pure invention. Every period of history is seen differently by every other period; the past is in perpetual flux, although only the past can be known. How usefully, therefore, may we supplement our direct knowledge of a period, by contrasting its view of a third, more remote period with our own views of this third period! In this way a work of historical fiction is much more a document on its own time than on the time portrayed. Equally relative, because equally passed through the sieve of our own interpretation, but enabling us to extend and solidify this interpretation of the past which is its meaning, its sense, for us. By comparing the period described in *Romola* as we know that period, with George Eliot's interpretation of it, we can supplement our knowledge (which is itself an interpretation and relative) of the mind and of the epoch of George Eliot. But unless George Eliot's novel gave a faithful presentation of Romola's time to George Eliot's contemporaries, it would have little to say to us about George Eliot's time.[2]

The rôle played by interpretation has often been neglected in the theory of knowledge. Even Kant, devoting a lifetime to the pursuit of categories, fixed only those which he believed, rightly or wrongly, to be permanent, and overlooked or neglected the fact that these are only the more stable of a vast system of categories in perpetual change. Some years ago, in a paper on "The Interpretation of Primitive Ritual,"[3]* I made an humble attempt to show that in many cases *no* interpretation of a rite could explain its origin. For the meaning of the series of acts is to the performers themselves an interpretation; the same ritual remaining practically unchanged may assume

different meanings for different generations of performers; and the rite may even have originated before "meaning" meant anything at all.[4*] The persons concerned may believe that the ritual is performed in order to induce a fall of rain; but this innocent belief throws no light on the genesis of their behaviour; and it is true even for the participants only in that if they became convinced that the rite had no effect upon the weather, they would probably, though with regret, cease the practice.

The interpretation of history is only a very much more complex but similar activity, and historical fiction only a special case of history. Those minds which are near to our own in time seem to us to present a more accurate picture of the past than do those minds which are themselves of the past. Mr. Ford Madox Hueffer (in an admirable unappreciated novel, *Ladies Whose Bright Eyes*) seems to offer a more authentic picture of the Age of Chivalry than does Scott.[5] It is not so; he only teaches us to see the Middle Ages as we see our own time, just as Scott taught his age to see the Middle Ages as it saw or wished to see itself. An historical work not only tells more – or what it tells is more authentic – about the age in which it is written than about the past; it may even tell us more about the future – when that future is also past. We can learn more from Scott about the Young England movement, and even about the Oxford movement, than we can learn from him about the Crusades.[6]

It has sometimes been remarked that the heroes of Shakespeare and Corneille are simply courtiers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, whatever the period in which they are set. But they are therefore more vital and accordingly truer to the life of any and every time than, for instance, the figures of Sienciewitz – anatomies of Roman archaeology seen through Polish spectacles.[7] Whatever documentary value pertains to the following series of scenes of the life of Savonarola is due to its rendering of a state of mind contemporary with the author (and such rendering is always shown by the choice of subject as well as by the treatment). The same is true of Mr. Bernard Shaw's *St. Joan*.[8] This Savonarola is a disciple of Schleiermacher, Emerson, Channing and Herbert Spencer;[9] this St. Joan is a disciple of Nietzsche, Butler and every chaotic and immature intellectual enthusiasm of the later nineteenth century. Savonarola has escaped from the cloister to the parsonage; St. Joan has escaped from the parsonage to a studio in Chelsea, and pretends to be one of the People. Savonarola is a contributor to the *Hibbert Journal*; Joan is a Life-Forcer *déclassée*.[10] In both is

perceptible a certain opposition to ecclesiasticism; the author of *Savonarola* opposes it directly by exhibiting the beauty of a character which was certainly above fanaticism, and which was not without moral grandeur, in conflict with the hierarchy of its place and time. Mr. Shaw opposes the Church by the more insidious method of defending it, and thereby creating an illusion of tolerance and broadmindedness which will deceive many, no doubt, but will not deceive the Muse of History.

II. OF DRAMATIC FORM

Dramatic form may occur at various points along a line the termini of which are liturgy and realism; at one extreme the arrow-dance of the Todas and at the other Sir Arthur Pinero – or at least the ideal Pinero of Mr. William Archer, who abundantly proved, in attempting to prove the contrary, the complete futility of complete realism.[11] In genuine drama the form is determined by the point on the line at which a tension between liturgy and realism takes place. In Marivaux and Congreve, as well as in Aeschylus and *Everyman*, this tension is found. In Ibsen and Chekhov we probably have drama at the extreme limit *beyond* which it ceases to have artistic form. Mr. Shaw can claim the title of artist only by grace of his very fine if somewhat eviscerated prose style – and his prose is no more "realistic" speech than is a conversation between characters of Congreve. For realistic speech we must go again to Sir Arthur Pinero and his peers.

Apparently the next step for the drama, if it retain sufficient animation to take any step at all, is in the opposite direction. But a step in the opposite direction is not, here, a step backwards. We cannot reinstate either blank verse or the heroic couplet. The next form of drama will have to be a verse drama but in new verse forms.[12] Perhaps the conditions of modern life (think how large a part is now played in our sensory life by the internal combustion engine!) have altered our perception of rhythms. At any rate, the recognised forms of speech-verse are not as efficient as they should be; probably a new form will be devised out of colloquial speech. Just as philosophical scepticism was nourishing and stimulating to the mind of a Greek trained in the execution of civic religious observances, and is not in the least nourishing to the modern mind which has been trained on nothing at all, so prose was more hygienic for the generation of Congreve and Wycherley than for us. In relaxing its form, the drama has lost its therapeutic value. Hence the popularity of the ballet. The play, like a religious

service, should be a stimulant to make life more tolerable and augment our ability to live; it should stimulate partly by the action of vocal rhythms on what, in our ignorance, we call the nervous system.

Meanwhile those fastidious persons who preserve a regard for the decencies of verse do well to incorporate their dramatic ideas in forms which are frankly impossible for the stage. The term "closet drama" is only a term of reproach when applied to plays – like those of Tennyson, Browning and Swinburne – about which there hovers some ambiguity as to whether their authors really thought that they could possibly be acted or not. A closet drama should never allow the reader to doubt that it was intended for reading or for declamation and not for acting. Such was the intention of the author of the following scenes from the life of Girolamo Savonarola. It was probably also the intention of Seneca, who invented a type of play which, though now little read and never declaimed, was not without its influence upon the drama of a much later time.[13]

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Charlotte Champe Stearns Eliot (1843-1929), TSE's mother, was a schoolteacher, social worker, and writer, with published poems primarily in religious journals, such as *The Christian Register* and *The Unitarian*, and in a single volume, *Easter Songs* (1899); she was also the author of *William Greenleaf Eliot: Minister, Educator, Philanthropist* (1904), a biography of her father-in-law. She received a bequest in 1923 that enabled her to provide a guarantee to a publisher for the printing of her dramatic poem, composed years earlier. TSE began corresponding with her about publishing the poem in Mar 1923 and expressed his wish to write a preface or introduction in Oct of that year; his mother welcomed the offer, suggesting: "How about the intellectual atmosphere of that period?" (*L2* 261). He first received the manuscript in Nov 1923 but had neither secured a publisher nor composed the introduction by late July 1925 (*L2* 710). By 12 Jan 1926, however, he had written the introduction, arranged with Richard Cobden-Sanderson to print the volume, and was designing the wrapper himself; he informed his mother that "the proof has been passed for printing. . . . It was difficult to write, as I felt perhaps an excessive diffidence about referring to the poem itself, and I am not quite satisfied with it. It is not so eulogistic, therefore, as my own feelings. . . . But I do not suppose that I should have been satisfied with anything I could have done" (*L3* 18-19). The volume was published on 8 Mar 1926 in an edition of 300 copies; TSE and Cobden-Sanderson were both unsuccessful in finding an American publisher.

Girolamo Savonarola (1452-1498) was a Dominican preacher and zealous reformer who gained renown for his vehement denunciations of corruption, licentiousness, and vanity in Florence, especially among the ruling families. After a brief period (1494-97) as unofficial dictator of the city, he fell victim to a rival political faction and was burned at the stake for heresy.

2. George Eliot's historical novel (1862-63) is set in fifteenth-century Florence during the rise and fall of Savonarola, whose religious zeal exerts positive influence on the female protagonist,

Romola de' Bardi. TSE read and assigned *Romola* for his Extension lectures on George Eliot in 1916-17 (1.479). He wrote to his cousin Eleanor Hinkley on 1 Apr 1918: "*Romola* is the most inartistic novel I have ever read" (*L1* 259).

3*. TSE's note: "The problem of interpretation was of great interest to that extraordinary philosopher Josiah Royce, for whose eye the paper in question was intended." The essay was written for Royce's "Philosophy 20c: Seminary in Logic" and was read by TSE on 9 Dec 1913 (1.106).

4*. TSE's note: "M. Levy-Bruhl seems to me to fall into the same difficulty in trying to avoid it. He invents an elaborate 'prelogism' to account for the savage's identification of himself with his totem, where it is not certain that the savage, except so far as he had mental processes similar to our own, had any mental process at all." TSE criticizes Levy-Bruhl's "theory of the pre-logical consciousness" of primitive peoples in "The Interpretation of Primitive Ritual" (1.106); he returns to the matter in his two reviews of Webb's *Group Theories of Religion and the Individual* (1.417, 1.430).

5. Hueffer's time-travel novel (1911) features a protagonist who travels from the twentieth to the fourteenth century, which he determines to exploit by making modern machines, weapons, printing presses, and other devices, only to discover that medieval conditions do not lend themselves to his skills; instead, he adapts himself to their chivalrous ways and eventually returns to the modern world with a larger sense of history. Sir Walter Scott's historical novels of the Middle Ages and chivalry include *Ivanhoe* (1819) and the two tales of the crusades, *The Talisman* (1825) and *The Betrothed* (1825), all set in twelfth-century England.

6. The Young England movement of the 1840s comprised a group of aristocratic conservatives, under the leadership of Benjamin Disraeli, who were distressed by the effects of the industrial revolution on the poor and who advocated the resurrection of a paternalistic social structure based on England's Christian feudal past. They published a short-lived weekly newspaper, *Young England; or, the Social Condition of the Empire* (1845); their aims and principles were embodied by Disraeli in his Young England trilogy, the first of which, *Coningsby; or, the New Generation* (1844), TSE taught in his 1916 Extension course on Victorian writers (1.479). The conservative Oxford Movement in the Church of England opposed the spread of religious liberalism and aimed at restoring the roots of Anglicanism in Roman Catholic liturgy and doctrines.

7. Henryk Sienkiewicz (1846-1916), Polish journalist and Nobel Prize-winning novelist (1905); TSE refers to his historical novel *Quo Vadis* (1895), which portrays Rome during the reign of emperor Nero.

8. "The comparison with Shaw is perhaps a little misleading," TSE admitted to his mother on 12 Jan 1926: "I wanted only to introduce some bright and controversial matter into my remarks, rather to stimulate curiosity in the poem than to tell the reader anything about it" (*L3* 19). He sharply criticized Shaw's portrait of Saint Joan as "a great middle-class reformer" in his *Criterion* "Commentary" of Oct 1924 and again in "Mr. Robertson and Mr. Shaw" (543, 781).

9. Like Friedrich Schleiermacher and, later, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Unitarian preacher William Ellery Channing (1780-1842) was a prominent member of the nineteenth-century Liberal movement in theology, which rejected the austere moral strictures of Roman Catholicism or Calvinism in favor of a theology based on moral sentiment, intuition, and religious emotion.

10. *The Hibbert Journal* (1902-1968) was a liberal Christian periodical in England devoted to religion and philosophy and edited by Unitarian Professor L. P. Jacks; TSE discussed a number

of essays on education reform and international ethics from the journal in his 1918 review "Recent British Periodical Literature in Ethics" (1.660). *déclassée:* having lost social status or prestige. Shaw's idea of the "Life Force," which TSE called "potent ju-ju" and "gross superstition," adapted Darwinian evolution to posit a universal impulse driving living organisms to greater degrees of intelligence and self-determination (780).

11. TSE refers to the ritual dance of the Veddas, indigenous tribes of Sri Lanka, who were the subject of anthropological inquiry during the early twentieth century, rather than the Todas, a more advanced people of Southern India, whom he likely read about in W. H. R. Rivers's *The Todas* (1906). During the ritual, the men of the tribe dance with increasing frenzy in a circle around an arrow lodged upright in the earth. TSE may recall the account from *Practice and Science of Religion* (1906), written by his former teacher at Harvard James Haughton Woods, or from Wilhelm Wundt's *Elements of Folk Psychology* (1916), which he first reviewed in 1917 (1.507). William Archer heralded Arthur Pinero's plays as breakthroughs in dramatic realism in *The Old Drama and the New* (1923) and elsewhere. For TSE's critique of Archer, see "Four Elizabethan Dramatists: A Preface to an Unwritten Book" (503).

12. TSE had been working on experimental forms for his own verse drama for at least six years; in Oct 1926, he arranged for what he called "my own pseudo-dramatic verse" to appear in the *Criterion* as "Fragment of a Prologue" (*L3* 261). His "Fragment of an Agon" also appeared there in Jan 1927, and the two were published together and later performed as the unfinished verse play, *Sweeney Agonistes* (1932).

13. See TSE's discussion of the declamatory nature of Seneca's tragedies and their influence upon Elizabethan dramatists in "Seneca in Elizabethan Translation" (1927) (*SE* 65).

A Commentary

The New Criterion: A Quarterly Review, 4 (Apr 1926) 221-23

THE FUTURE OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

An overworked and harried prime minister, addressing a non-political body on a non-political subject, is in a peculiarly difficult position. No recent tenant of that place, except perhaps the Earl of Oxford, could have composed a more admirable specimen of such oratory than Mr. Baldwin's recent address to the Classical Association.[1] Any prime minister, of any party, might have been glad to make the same speech in the same circumstances. And as every public word of any statesman is suspect of political significance, and as we are convinced that Mr. Baldwin had nothing of the sort consciously or unconsciously in mind, and as the subject of his address is akin to the subject of a paragraph in an early number of *The Criterion*,[2*] it seems suitable for mention in these pages.

It should be obvious that Mr. Baldwin's speech (reported in *The Times* of January 9th) bore no allusion, and cannot be cited either in support or condemnation of the present government of Italy.[3] With the benefits or disadvantages of the present administration of Italy, except in so far as they can be shown to advance or obstruct Italian literature and culture, we have nothing to do, nor, we suppose, had Mr. Baldwin in his capacity as President of the Classical Association. We presume that his address would have been the same, whatever government had been flourishing or dwindling in Italy at the moment. The point upon which we ought to insist is this, that the Roman Empire does concern us, but that whatever use may be made of that idea in Italian politics as an incentive to Italian action is a local matter which does not concern – in either way – those persons who are interested primarily in European ideas. The old Roman Empire is an European idea; the new Roman Empire is an Italian idea, and the two must be kept distinct.

It may be objected with reason that Mr. Baldwin vacillates between the idea at a certain moment – at what moment is not clear, and in his speech there is even some ambiguity as to whether he is not at moments thinking of the idea of the Roman Republic – and the general idea of the Roman

Empire. The general idea is found in the continuity of the impulse of Rome to the present day. It suggests Authority and Tradition, certainly, but Authority and Tradition (especially the latter) do not necessarily suggest Signor Mussolini. It is an idea which comprehends Hooker and Laud as much as (or to some of us more than) it implies St. Ignatius or Cardinal Newman. It is in fact the European idea – the idea of a common culture of western Europe. And when Mr. Baldwin asks whether there are "enough of the breed" left in Britain, we should transpose the question, and ask, are there enough persons in Britain believing in that European culture, the Roman inheritance, believing in the place of Britain in that culture, and believing in themselves?[4]

In this number of *The New Criterion* we publish an essay by the editor of *La Revue Universelle*, M. Henri Massis, in which the author states the problem as it appears to a Frenchman, and in which he states his own conclusion.[5] In England, in Germany, in Italy or Spain, the problem may appear under a different light. We hope to obtain contributions to the same discussion from men of equal eminence and of different nationalities.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

In a recent, and most interesting address to the *Lessing-Akademie* in Berlin, Herr Max Scheler summarises the present situation in words which may be paraphrased somewhat as follows:[6]

> Russia: an *index librorum prohibitorum*, on which stand both Testaments, the Koran, the Talmud and all philosophers from Thales to Fichte. No book, in which the word "God" appears, is allowed over the frontiers. Only are allowed books of direct utility of a technical, hygienic and economic class. . . . Tolstoi's writings of his elder period publicly burnt. – The United States of America: A movement called "fundamentalism," according to which the Bible as verbally inspired is established as the foundation of knowledge and life; a popular movement which aims at nothing less than the legal prohibition to teach in any publicly supported educational institution the theory of Evolution in any of its forms. . . . In Italy: a popular movement that in a childish, so-called "activism" and "vitalism" cultivates a verbose and vapid philosophy of history . . . which accepts the Church of Rome not as an universal institution of truth and healing, but as a mere element in Italian history. . . . In Spain: one of the noblest and most honest of men, Unamuno, banished,

> the universities in bitter struggle for life against clericalism. . . . In Germany: . . . a revolution which, contrary to the practice of revolutions, has greatly strengthened the power of the Roman Church.

Herr Scheler continues in the same strain concerning the dangers, coming from both Socialism and the Church, to freedom of opinion in the German universities. It is notable that in this list neither France nor England is included. We do not vouch for his accuracy, we pass no opinion; but it is matter for sober reflection, rather than for premature jubilation, that he appears by implication to consider that in England and in France the culture of ideas has still as much liberty as, let us say, in the Sorbonne in the XIIIth century.[7] In this connexion we refer the reader to Mr. W. B. Yeats's commentary in this number of *The New Criterion* upon a recent incident in Dublin: these notes have already been published in America, but it was thought that so distinguished an author as Mr. Yeats should be given the opportunity of exposing his views in this country also.[8]

NOTES

1. H. H. Asquith, 1st Earl of Oxford and Asquith (1852-1928), prime minister from 1908 to 1916 and leader of the Liberal Party, was president of the Classical Association and gave the presidential address in 1908. Stanley Baldwin (1867-1947), in his second term as Conservative prime minister and leader of the House of Commons, gave his presidential address, "The Classics and the Plain Man," on 8 Jan 1926, printed in the *Times* of 9 Jan 1926 (6).

2*. TSE's note: "Vol. II, No. V. Note by Richard Aldington."

TSE refers to "The Church of Rome," in which Aldington asserted that "No man who values the arts, the intellectual life, the genius of order, can neglect the Church without injury to himself; merely as an organization the Roman Church exacts our admiration as powerfully as some imposing architectural mass. For eight or nine centuries, the spiritual, intellectual, and artistic life of Western Europe hardly existed apart from the Church." *Criterion*, 2 (Oct 1923), 105.

3. Following the official organization of the Fascist party in Nov 1921 and the march on Rome in Oct 1922, Mussolini gradually transformed the Italian government into a dictatorship by suppressing opposition with secret police and Fascist militia. For TSE's earlier remarks on "Fascismo," see his letter to the editor of the *Daily Mail* on 8 Jan 1923 (430).

4. Referring to classical scholar J. W. Mackail's view that one explanation for the decline of the Roman Empire is that "there were not enough Romans left to carry on the work of Rome," Baldwin had stated: "There are fears among those who are responsible for Government to-day . . . that the Great War, by the destruction of the best lives in such numbers, has not left enough of the breed to carry on the work of the Empire. Our task is hard enough . . . yet who in Europe does not know that one more war in the West and the civilization of the ages will fall with as great a shock as that of Rome? She has left danger-signals along the road: it is for us to read them."

5. The critic and historian Henri Massis (1886-1970) was co-founder and editor of the right-wing periodical *La Revue universelle* (1920-44), which championed political nationalism and Catholicism. TSE wrote to him on 26 Jan 1926 about reprinting his article, "Défense de l'Occident," which had appeared in the issue of 15 Oct 1925. A version that Massis "modified and extended . . . for us so as to give it new value" was translated for the *New Criterion* by F. S. Flint as "Defence of the West" (224-43; June, 476-93) (*L2* 672). Massis focused on the "Oriental anarchy," aided by Germany and Russia, perceived to be threatening "the soul of the West" (231). On 20 Mar 1926, TSE arranged a lecture and dinner for Massis during his visit to London, and on 13 June 1926, he told his mother that Massis's article "proved to be the most popular in the last number. He is one of the royalist and neo-catholic group as are in fact most of my friends in Paris" (*L3* 187). He warned a later contributor, however, to "avoid Massis's own difficulties – i.e. he covers far too much ground, for him the East is now Russia . . . now India, now China" (*L3* 249).

6. The address on 17 Jan 1925 by the phenomenologist Max Scheler (1874-1928) was published as a pamphlet, *Die Formen des Wissens und die Bildung* [The Forms of Knowledge and Culture] (Bonn: F. Cohen, 1925), p. 48. TSE wrote to E. R. Curtius on 15 Feb 1926: "I have been very much interested in the speech of Max Scheler which you sent me and may mention it in *The Criterion*" (*L3* 77). On the recommendation of Curtius, who called Scheler "one of the 3 or 4 most important thinkers of modern Europe," TSE later corresponded with Scheler and printed a translated excerpt from his work in the Feb 1928 issue of the *Criterion* (*L3* 540, 561).

7. The Collège de Sorbonne, originally a college and residence hall at the University of Paris, was founded in 1257 for the security and training of theology students, quickly becoming the acknowledged center of theological inquiry. Its students were subject only to ecclesiastical jurisdiction and moved rapidly into the higher ranks of the Church hierarchy.

8. Yeats's essay, "The Need for Audacity of Thought," which first appeared in the *Dial* in Feb 1926, was reprinted as "Our Need for Religious Sincerity" in the present issue of the *New Criterion* (306-11). It describes attacks by the Christian Brothers against the publication of the traditional Christian "Cherry-Tree Carol," said to be composed in blasphemous language, and the attack by the Irish Religious Press on Lennox Robinson for a story based on an irreligious account of the Second Coming in an Irish village. "I do not condemn those who were shocked by the naïve faith of the old Carol or by Mr. Lennox Robinson's naturalism," writes Yeats, "but I have a right to condemn those who encourage a Religious Press so discourteous as to accuse a man of Mr. Lennox Robinson's eminence of a deliberate insult to the Christian religion . . . and a system which has left the education of Irish children in the hands of men so ignorant that they do not recognize the most famous Carol in the English language" (311).

Mr. Robertson and Mr. Shaw

A review of *Mr. Shaw and "The Maid,"* by J. M. Robertson

London: R. Cobden-Sanderson, 1925. Pp. vi + 115.

The New Criterion: A Quarterly Review, 4 (Apr 1926) 389-90

It is itself a worn-out proverb, that no philosophy is ever refuted, but every philosophy becomes outworn. The fact that Mr. Bernard Shaw's currency is steadily declining in value, as more and more of it appears in circulation, and the probability that in ten or fifteen years it will no longer be accepted at all, do not constitute sufficient evidence that it is bad money. The more intelligent among those persons who have lost interest in anything that Mr. Shaw says, ought to be glad of some proof that their feelings are justified. Mr. Robertson has provided for such people a very valuable document.[1] There are still many people so devoted as to stop their ears to any criticism of Mr. Shaw whatever, and, on the other hand, a growing number who are too fatigued by him to want to think about the matter at all. But no one should be too tired of the subject to read Mr. Robertson's small book. In *St. Joan* Mr. Shaw has unluckily chosen a subject in which Mr. Robertson has interest and of which he has knowledge. Mr. Shaw's subject is also one in which Facts matter. Mr. Robertson likes Facts, and deploys his facts with a grim northern wit which operates with the effect of a steam roller.

Mr. Robertson's book is so brief, and his arguments so compact, that it would be a pity to attempt to summarise or select; everyone who is interested in the truth will read the book. Mr. Robertson is a Rationalist, with a genuine respect and admiration for Sainte Jeanne;[2] but his book is of equal value to people who approach the problem from an orthodox Christian standpoint. For what issues most clearly from a reading of Mr. Robertson's book is Mr. Shaw's utter inability to devote himself wholeheartedly to *any* cause. To Mr. Shaw, truth and falsehood (we speak without prejudice) do not seem to have the same meaning as to ordinary people. Hence the danger, with his *St. Joan*, of his deluding the numberless crowd of sentimentally religious people who are incapable of following any argument to a conclusion. Such people will be misled until they can be made to understand that the potent ju-ju of the Life Force is a gross superstition;[3] and

that (in particular) Mr. Shaw's *St. Joan* is one of the most superstitious of the effigies which have been erected to that remarkable woman.

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. TSE told Robertson on 9 Jan 1926 that he found *Mr. Shaw and "The Maid"* waiting upon his return from France "and fell upon it at once with joy. I congratulate you upon it and congratulate myself on once more finding myself fighting in your ranks. I have been attacking this play myself and you will find one acid reference to it in my introductory note for *The New Criterion*. I shall review your book myself in the April number" (*L3* 7). TSE first criticized Shaw's play in his Oct 1924 *Criterion* "Commentary" (539).

2. TSE follows Robertson's statement in the Preface that he has "called The Maid sometimes Joan, in English connections, and sometimes Jeanne . . . in the hope that English people will get into the way of calling her by her French name, as they commonly do with French men" (vi).

3. ju-ju: any object superstitiously venerated by West African tribes for its supernatural or magical powers.

In his idiosyncratic adaptation of evolutionary theory, Shaw postulated the existence of a mysterious "life force," whose thrust was ultimately to realize itself in godhead through the creation of a race of supermen with godlike knowledge and power. The theory informs plays such as *Man and Superman: A Comedy and a Philosophy* (1903) and speeches such as "A New Theology" (1907).

An untitled review of *All God's Chillun Got Wings* (with *Desire under the Elms* and *Welded*) by Eugene O'Neill

London: Jonathan Cape, 1925. Pp. 74, 115, 91, separately paginated.

The New Criterion: A Quarterly Review, 4 (Apr 1926) 395-96.

One is diffident of passing judgment upon a play which one has not seen upon the stage, but Mr. O'Neill's plays – especially the first of these three – are so readable, and so impressive when read, that their publication in a book must be noticed. I believe that in America, where Mr. O'Neill's plays have had a prodigious success, their author is placed with Pirandello, or even above Pirandello, as the author of a renascence of the drama.[1] This enthusiasm, for either Mr. O'Neill or Signor Pirandello, I cannot share. I know that Pirandello is a master of the technique of the theatre, as I have seen one or two of his plays; I believe O'Neill to be the same, because of the esteem which he enjoys. In reading *All God's Chillun Got Wings*, we stick at the representation of the two principal actors, in successive scenes, in childhood, in adolescence, and in maturity; we wonder whether the play must not somewhat drag, from the lack of unity due to the attempt to cover such a span of time. But Mr. O'Neill has got hold of a "strong plot"; he not only understands one aspect of the "negro problem," but he succeeds in giving this problem universality, in implying a wider application. In *this* respect, he is more successful than the author of *Othello*, in implying something more universal than the problem of race – in implying, in fact, the universal problem of differences which create a mixture of admiration, love, and contempt, with the consequent tension. At the same time, he has never deviated from exact portrayal of a possible negro, and the close is magnificent. The other plays show the same ability at work, but are intrinsically less interesting.[2]

T. S. E.

NOTES

1. TSE had received from a translation agency an unsolicited copy of "The Shrine," a story by dramatist and fiction writer Luigi Pirandello (1867-1936), which he published in the second

issue of the *Criterion*. In Aug 1925, he placed Pirandello's name on a list of European writers for a proposed Faber monograph series "to introduce the British reader to the most important movements of thought and literary art on the continent" (*L2* 716-17), and he corresponded in Nov 1925 with C. K. Scott Moncrieff, one of Pirandello's translators, about printing other pieces by Pirandello in the *Criterion* (*L2* 778). On 14 Jan 1926, however, he told Scott Moncrieff: "I should like to hold off for the present because Pirandello has been appearing in several places as well as once already in *The Criterion* and I should like to be able to introduce a few other Italians before using another of his stories" (*L3* 25).

2. When this review was reprinted in *O'Neill and his Plays: Four Decades of Criticism*, ed. Oscar Cargill, et al. (New York: New York UP, 1961), TSE asked the editors to preface it with the following note: "This note on *All God's Chillun Got Wings* first appeared in *The Criterion* of April 1926. I should like to make it clear to the present readers that at that time I had never seen any of Eugene O'Neill's plays on the stage. Since then I have gained experience of the theatre myself and I realize that a play must be judged from seeing it on the stage as well as reading the text. This is particularly true, I think, of the plays of Eugene O'Neill. It is only within the last two or three years that I have seen plays by him performed: *A Long Day's Journey Into Night* in the London production and *A Touch of the Poet* in New York. I should like to say that I place his work very high indeed, and *A Long Day's Journey Into Night* seems to me one of the most moving plays I have ever seen" (168).

A Commentary

The New Criterion: A Quarterly Review, 4 (June 1926) 417-20

THE SUNDAY THEATRICAL SOCIETIES

During the last year or two the number of societies for subscription performances has increased amazingly. Besides the Stage Society, and its offshoots, the Phoenix and the Greek Play Society, there exist the Renaissance Theatre, the Film Society, and several societies for the production of the work of new or exotic playwrights. The number of these organisations is not, in an absolute sense, excessive: nearly every one of them has a distinct and praiseworthy purpose. But it is obvious that this kind of society cannot multiply, or even continue in its present numbers without some reconstruction. The support for it comes from a very small number of people, few of whom can be called enthusiasts: they grow tired of signing cheques, and what is still worse, grow tired of seeing each others' faces. Before we reach the point at which the "revival" of interest in the theatre threatens to extinguish itself, it is well to consider whether a healthier organisation might not be manipulated.

A NATIONAL THEATRE TOO EDUCATIONAL

Dissatisfaction with the contemporary "commercial" stage can never be wholly appeased by any number of revivals, importations and private performances, though if these can be stabilised they may in time influence the public stage: the Phoenix helped to prepare an audience for *The Way of the World*.[1] On the other hand, the project of a national theatre, at which all masterpieces shall be performed in rotation, is one which makes us quail. We have no confidence in any combination of persons which might rise to power; in any commissions, boards, committees or directors who might be elected to choose and produce the repertoire. Our contemporary, *The Mask* (April), is angry with the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust for bestowing £14,200 for the purchase of Sadler's Wells as "an Old Vic for North London." According to *The Mask*, the Carnegie Trust pronounces that "drama is a definite factor in national education." We have not verified the quotation, but the dreadful term, *definite factor*, rings true to the spirit

of philanthropy, and so does *national education*.[2] Civilisation, culture, and enjoyment of anything intellectual being suspect, they cannot pass authority unless disguised beneath the dim word "education" – a word which has lost almost all meaning, but which still fortifies in utilitarian and democratic odour. A National Theatre is not a thing to educate anybody; it is something to which the public, in a very long time, must first be educated.

THE PRIVATE SOCIETIES AGAIN

It is impossible, in a metropolis, to obtain the conditions for a Maddermarket Theatre; though it might be possible, and is certainly desirable, to get Mr. Nugent Monck to stage performances for the societies in London.[3] What practical suggestions we can make are barely these: (1) to legalise the Sunday performances as a public entertainment, so that they could be properly advertised and so that tickets could be sold at the door to anyone; (2) to organise the various societies so that a performance of one kind or another might be found every Sunday *at the same theatre*, and to advertise the whole organisation in such a way as to appeal to the desire for pleasure, not the cupidity for education or up-to-dateness. Enough recruits might be added to the audience to be disciplined into the *corps d'élite* of the general public; and at the same time a number of half-hearted social troopers would be released to the more congenial allegiance to Arlen and Coward.[4]

THE PHOENIX

Whether such a proposal be chimerical or not, it would be a very great pity if, in the meantime, The Phoenix were incinerated for ever. The Phoenix has done some very fine work under great difficulties. It has been limited in its scope: with an uncertain and capricious public, it has been restricted to plays, among Elizabethan and Restoration Drama, for which the public was more or less prepared. Its greatest successes, therefore, have been in Restoration Comedy. There is a great deal more that the Phoenix could do; many Elizabethan plays which, if in a stable position, it might revive. But its peculiar value, among all the societies, is this: that the plays which it has presented, constitute an assertion of *literary* values on the stage. Now, whatever else may be said, good or bad, of contemporary drama here or abroad, we must agree that its literary value is almost null. We do not mean that plays are unreadable, but that they lack all beauty of phrase, thought and image. The modern tendency is opposed to Sophocles,

Racine and Shakespeare; the performances of the Phoenix, where we may hear dramatic poetry which we have never heard, but only read, are of inestimable value in maintaining the importance of the literary element in drama.[5]

THE MODERN STAGE

The Little Review, of New York, has published an instructive number, with many photographs, devoted to a recent Theatre Exhibition. It illustrates the scenery and expounds the ambitions of various contemporary producers, chiefly Russian.[6] This modern theatre (Meierhold, etc.) appears to be one in which the drama is completely extinguished by the spectacle, by the satisfaction of visual sensations. It seems to originate in Russia and to percolate Germany to western Europe. We do not deny that such spectacles, such combinations of "abstract machinery" and abstract masses of well-drilled human beings of symbolical significance, may be made very exciting and even moving. But a spectacle is only a spectacle, and the new Russian theatre appears to me a phenomenon of the revolt against the intellect. Similarly the cinema, because it is without words, is a potent agent against intellect. In a "classical" drama the elements of thought, word and scene, of visual and aural rhythm, form a unity.

"THE ART OF BEING RULED"

Mr. Wyndham Lewis's new book might be added to those mentioned in the January *New Criterion* as significant of the tendency of contemporary thought.[7] It is a book which must be dealt with at some length in a later number: it requires both editorial mention and a review.[8] For editorial purposes it is enough to observe that Mr. Lewis's observations of contemporary society tend toward similar conclusions to those of such critics as Benda, Babbitt, or Maritain, whose approach is very different. The artist in the modern world, as Mr. I. A. Richards pointed out in *The Criterion* of July, 1925, is heavily hampered in ways that the public does not understand.[9] He finds himself, if he is a man of intellect, unable to realise his art to his own satisfaction, and he may be driven to examining the elements in the situation – political, social, philosophical or religious – which frustrate his labour. In this uncomfortable pursuit he is accused of "neglecting his art." But it is likely that some of the strongest influences on the thought of the next generation may be those of the dispossessed artists.

NOTES

1. Though the Phoenix Society itself did not produce *The Way of the World* (the play was announced in Sept 1923 but subsequently abandoned to avoid a conflict with the Lyric Theatre's production), it prepared the public through frequent productions of Congreve's work and other Restoration plays without any excisions of the text. Phoenix founder Montague Summers states that, anticipating the demise of the Society in 1926, he independently organized a single performance of *The Mourning Bride* at the Scala Theatre on 22 Nov 1925 in order "to complete the full cycle of Congreve's plays." *The Restoration Theatre* (London: Kegan Paul, 1934), 329. For TSE's remarks on the Society's productions of Congreve, see his *Criterion* "Commentary" for July 1924 (532).

2. Featured as "A Protest from 'The Mask'" and titled "Old Wool and More Cottonwool for the Incompetent," the anonymous article appeared in Gordon Craig's *The Mask: A Journal of the Art of the Theatre*, 12 (Apr 1926), 75-78; *read*: "we believe in the Drama as a definite factor in national education" (75). Following a national appeal in 1925 to purchase and rebuild the derelict Sadler's Wells theatre, closed since 1916, Andrew Carnegie's United Kingdom Trust made the purchase in cooperation with the Old Vic and opened the new theatre in 1931.

3. The playwright and director Nugent Monck (1877-1958) founded the Maddermarket Theatre in July 1921 on the model of an Elizabethan theatre; it was located in Norwich, a manufacturing and industrial city of breweries and medieval churches in the east of England. Monck's Norwich Players presented a new production there each month and produced all of Shakespeare's plays by 1927. TSE wrote to Benjamin Gilbert Brooks on 31 Dec 1924: "I should be delighted if you would submit a note on the Norwich Theatre. I have, as a matter of fact, had in mind to try to get something written about it" (*L2* 564); he published Brooks's enthusiastic account of the productions at the Maddermarket in the *Criterion* for Apr 1925 (415-19).

4. Michael Arlen (Dikran Kouyoumdjian, 1895-1956), Armenian playwright and novelist, was the author of *The Green Hat* (1924), which was turned into a West End and Broadway play that made him a wealthy celebrity. His friend Noël Coward (1899-1973), actor, playwright, and director, had several plays about the vices of aristocrats running in the West End during the previous year. His *Easy Virtue* was playing at the Duke of York's Theatre at the time of the present essay.

5. The Phoenix gave its final performance, *The Gentleman Dancing-Master*, on 20 Dec 1925. The programme for the 1925-26 season announced *The White Devil* and *The Soldier's Fortune* for spring 1926, but they were not staged. TSE had been a subscribing member since the founding of the Society in 1919; he resigned from the board of directors in a letter to W. Matthew Norgate on 11 June 1926 (*L3* 177). And he wrote to W. S. Kennedy on 28 July about the demise of the Society ("I hardly expected that it could be otherwise") and about his hope for an additional performance to offset the founders' financial losses, concluding: "I should like to have been of more use to 'The Phoenix' than merely serving as one of the pall bearers" (*L3* 227-28).

6. In collaboration with the International Theatre Exposition held in New York from 27 Feb to 15 Mar 1926, *The Little Review* organized a special theatre issue (11, Winter 1926), which focused on new developments in several European countries and served as a catalogue for the exhibition. TSE refers specifically to the essay "The Russian Theatre of Today," in which S.

Margoline refers to experimental Russian director and actor Vsévolöd Meierhold (1874-1940) as the harbinger of "a new era of the theatre": "He has created the style of the contemporary drama: sober, clear, laconic, and full of movement" (14).

7. For TSE's remarks on "the modern tendency . . . toward something which, for want of a better name, we may call classicism" and his list of works that exemplify that tendency, see "The Idea of a Literary Review" (764-65).

8. Lewis's *The Art of Being Ruled* (1926) was reviewed in the next issue (Oct 1926, 758-64) by W. A. Thorpe, who observed that "Mr. Lewis voices the increasing body of opinion which has travelled by the path of socialism towards a belief in order and authority" (763).

9. In "A Background for Contemporary Poetry" (511-28), Richards examined the consequences for poetry of the transference from the "Magical View" of the world to the scientific view, concluding: "A poet to-day, whose integrity is equal to that of the greater poets of the past, is inevitably plagued by the problem of thought and feeling as poets have never been plagued before" (528).

English Verse Satire

An unsigned review of *A Book of English Verse Satire* ed. A. G. Barnes

London: Methuen, 1926. Pp. xix + 172.

Times Literary Supplement, 1273 (24 June 1926) 429

To make a good anthology it is not enough to select good poems. It is necessary to have a plan, and a plan justified of literary criticism; and it is necessary to have a sense of proportion and order beyond one's personal enthusiasms. A good anthology, of the special type, is proved by three results – it renews our acquaintance with verse which we have neglected, it reveals to us verse of which we were ignorant, and it exposes relationships where we did not suppose them to exist. A good anthology is a work of literary criticism in itself.

Mr. Barnes's anthology is fully justified. It is small – the text covers only 147 pages. The temptation to include specimens of every poet who has ever written satirical lines is one which Mr. Barnes has avoided; every one of the poets included may be said to have paid some attention to satire as a literary form. The book is arranged in chronological order, and begins with Donne and Hall. Though we think that a specimen of Marston might have been added, if only to show the superiority of both Donne and Hall, the principle is right: to date satire only from the period when English poets began consciously to emulate Persius and Juvenal.[1] We are spared the selections from Langland, Skelton, and Dunbar, which would only confuse us, and which most anthology makers would have included. And in the last three centuries alone we may be grateful to Mr. Barnes for what he has left out as well as for what he has put in. There is nothing from Burns. That is right; the only way to form an anthology of satire is to follow the letter rather than the spirit. There are several of Burns's poems which are, in the spirit, highly "satirical." But the distinction between the "satirical" and "satire" is one worth keeping; for the literary form of satire has its own spirit, as well as the satirical spirit which impels it; and this spirit of the form of satire, however violent, rough, or outspoken it may be, is essentially urbane and even urban. Even Crabbe, who is rightly represented in this collection,

seems to belong only just within the confines of satire; his choice of country subjects makes him an anomaly.

Mr. Barnes has so clearly recognized and faithfully obeyed the limitations that it is surprising to find how much good satire, in the strict sense, there is in English verse, and how much that is little known. The greatest satirists are included and represented by their best-known pieces – Dryden by Og and Doeg and MacFlecknoe, Pope by Atticus and the other most familiar selections – and these inclusions are of great value in helping us to estimate the unknown and unjudged by the known and undisputed.[2] Dryden and Pope issue from the comparison with their greatness, if possible, more firmly established than ever; but the minor work – and this is a good test – shines with greater brilliance in their light. Few persons will take the trouble to become acquainted with Oldham or Churchill entire, though most have heard their names; Mr. Barnes's selections give them their proper place.[3] Still fewer have ever read *The Rolliad* and too few the delightful *Anti-Jacobin* of Canning and Frere.[4] For these Mr. Barnes deserves special thanks.

Such an anthology is itself a better definition of English satire than any that can be formulated. For instance, when we read a part of *The Vanity of Human Wishes* in this book, we feel without question that that mighty poem is indeed a "satire"; but to provide a definition of satire which should comprehend and define *The Vanity of Human Wishes* and *MacFlecknoe* without including other poems which are not "satires," is extremely difficult. Mr. Barnes himself is rather hard put to it in his preface. He says tentatively "to define satire is never easy; but it covers most of the ground to say that it chastises follies and crimes by making them ridiculous" [x]. But does Johnson make follies and crimes "ridiculous"? And is not "ridiculous" too near to "ludicrous" to apply even to Juvenal? *Ridiculous* applies most justly, if anywhere to the victims of Pope; Dryden leaves his victims *ludicrous*; but there are other true satirists whose operation is neither. In short, Mr. Barnes's definition appears to be rather a definition of *comedy* – almost Meredith's definition – than of satire.[5] And again, Mr. Barnes remarks that "the satirist is above all poets dependent upon his material. He is to a great extent made by the character of his victims . . . A clever writer may become lost in obscurity merely because his butts are forgotten and have carried their poet into oblivion with them" [v]. The rejoinder seems to be, that a clever writer who is lost in obscurity for this reason is not clever enough, or poet enough. The effect should be the opposite. Mr. Barnes says that

"Dryden was lucky in his victims, who were in most cases men of position worthy of his pen, but the fact that his work has outlived its occasion must be attributed to the excellence of his satire" [152]. Shaftesbury was, it is true, a "man of position,"[6] but who can, without an effort, remember the originals of Doeg and Og? The "position" of Settle and Shadwell after 300 years is a position for which they have Dryden to thank.[7] Mr. Barnes seems nearer to the truth of the matter in his note on Pope. Of Pope he says: "Out of the passing individuals he succeeded in creating abiding types, so that where Cibber and Tibbald have faded, the picture of the eternal dunce remains" [156].[8] Here Mr. Barnes put his finger on the point at which Pope may be said to be superior to Dryden: his reduction of the individual to the typical. Dryden is a great, perhaps the greatest, verse caricaturist; his most "typical" object of satire is probably Achitophel. Yet we feel that Og and Doeg and MacFlecknoe are just as truly pieces of satire; and we find ourselves, in consequence, no nearer to the definition of satire than we were before.

One revelation for which we have to thank this anthology is the success with which Byron's *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* withstands comparison with earlier satire, and the finality with which it eclipses all satire written since.[9] Mr. Barnes recognizes explicitly in his preface the alteration of tone, which he even admits to be a decline of vigour, of verse satire in the nineteenth century.

> With the beginning of the nineteenth century, indeed with the *English Bards*, the school of Juvenal more or less comes to an end. Political satire was now rare, literary satire was generally parody, and social satire took the form of playfully humorous verse. *Vers-de-société*, the lyric of everyday life, originating in the occasional poetry of Matthew Prior, gained in polish as it grew in popularity . . . a satiric flavour, but without vindictiveness and often without seriousness. [xiii]

Mr. Barnes suggests several auxiliary reasons for this change, for the increase of "playful humorous verse," for the decline of "seriousness" in satire. But he hesitates, and we hesitate with him, to pronounce a final opinion. So he leaves us, with his anthology as testimony, to meditate upon his observation that:

> In our own time Sir Owen Seaman has certainly succeeded in putting a certain satiric spice into his work, but taken as a whole the verse contributed to *Punch* in the last fifty years is evidence that the mode of Winthrop Praed and Peacock has prevailed. [xiv][10]

NOTES

1. Barnes posits three Roman models of satire – "the virulent, the playful, and the moral" (vi) – which he associates, respectively, with Juvenal, Horace, and Persius (32-62 AD). He divides English satirists into corresponding categories and asserts that "the Elizabethans, as leading up to the great writers of the Augustan period . . . were the first definitely to imitate the Romans; they had the Roman idea of the meaning of satire" (x).

2. Dryden's Og and Doeg (satirizing Elkanah Settle and Thomas Shadwell) are characters in *Absalom and Achitophel* (1681), Mac Flecknoe (Thomas Shadwell) in *Mac Flecknoe; or, A Satyr upon the True-Blew-Protestant, T. S.* (1682). Pope's satiric portrait of Atticus (Joseph Addison) appears in *An Epistle from Mr. Pope, to Dr. Arbuthnot* (1735).

3. Barnes includes from John Oldham an extract, "The Professions," from *A Satire Addressed to a Friend that Is about to Leave the University* (1674), and from Charles Churchill extracts on Bishop Warburton from *The Duellist* (1763), and on Samuel Johnson from *The Ghost* (1762).

4. Barnes describes these works in his notes for the volume: "*The Rolliad* (1784-5), published in the *Morning Chronicle*, was the first work of the Esto Perpetua Club, which was formed after the Whig defeat to fight against Pitt. Its authors pretended that an epic called the Rolliad had been written upon an ancestor of John Rolle, a Tory M. P., and they produced a series of critical essays upon this mythical poem, with extracts from the text" (160). He continues: "*The Anti-Jacobin* or Weekly Examiner (1797-8) was founded by George Canning and John Hookham Frere [1769-1846] to fight revolutionary ideas in England. Its poems, professing to be written by English Jacobins, were the most famous part of the paper, and were collected into one volume" (165).

5. Meredith distinguishes between satire and comedy in *An Essay on Comedy and the Uses of the Comic Spirit* (Westminster: Archibald Constable and Co., 1897): "Incidents of a kind casting ridicule on our unfortunate nature, instead of our conventional life, provoke derisive laughter, which thwarts the Comic idea. . . . The laughter of satire is a blow in the back or the face. The laughter of comedy is impersonal and of unrivaled politeness, nearer a smile – often no more than a smile. It laughs through the mind, for the mind directs it; and it might be called the humor of the mind" (87-88).

6. Anthony Ashley Cooper, 1st Earl of Shaftesbury, Whig parliamentarian and original of Achitophel, opposed Charles II's plan to reintroduce Catholicism by proposing an Exclusion Bill to place Charles's illegitimate son first in the line of succession over his Catholic brother, the future James II. Shaftesbury was arrested on a charge of treason; when he was acquitted by a Whig jury, Charles suggested to Dryden that he write the poem to secure Shaftesbury's condemnation.

7. The originals of Doeg and Og were Dryden's rivals, the poet and dramatist Elkanah Settle and the dramatist and Poet Laureate Thomas Shadwell: "Two Fools that Crutch their Feeble sense on Verse, / Who by my Muse, to all succeeding times / Shall live, in spight of their own Dogrell Rhimes." *Absalom and Achitophel* (ll. 409-11), in *The Poems of John Dryden*, ed. John Sargeaunt (London: Henry Frowde, 1910), 69. Dryden satirized Shadwell at greater length in *Mac Flecknoe.*

8. In *The Dunciad* (1729), Pope satirizes his antagonists the dramatist and comic actor Colley Cibber (1671-1757) and the critic and dramatist Lewis Theobold (1688-1744), Pope's

"Tibbald" and King of Dunces. In the *New Dunciad* (1742), Tibbald was replaced as King of Dunces by Cibber, who had in the interim become Poet Laureate.

9. Byron's Juvenalian satire, published in 1809, attacked both the Lake School of romantic poets and their detractors, the critics of *The Edinburgh Review*.

10. From Sir Owen Seaman (1861-1936), poet and editor of *Punch* since 1906, Barnes includes "Partant pour la Chine; or, The New Evangelist"; from Winthrop Mackworth Praed (1802-39), "A Letter of Advice" and "The Talented Man"; and from poet and novelist Thomas Love Peacock, "Rich and Poor or Saint and Sinner" and "A New Order of Chivalry."

The Influence of Ovid

An unsigned review of *Ovid and his Influence* by Edward Kennard Rand

London: G. G. Harrap, 1926. Pp. xii + 184.

Times Literary Supplement, 1274 (1 July 1926) 442

Professor Rand, who is an authority on Boethius and on early medieval Latin, is well qualified both by scholarship and by urbanity of mind for writing a popular introduction to Ovid's poetry.[1] This volume is one of a series ("Our Debt to Greece and Rome") which appears to be of Transatlantic inception, though it includes such names as Professor Mackail, Signor Ferrero, Mr. Sheppard and Mr. Lucas.[2] It is worthy of such a series: it is useful for anyone studying Ovid for the first time, and also for anyone studying in detail the work and its influence.

Indeed, if there is any case among poets where the "influence" is as important as the poetry it is that of Ovid. Of this Professor Rand is well aware: both by his choice of title and by the space – nearly a half – which he devotes to the influence in this short book of 184 pages. Dr. Rand was, perhaps, restricted by the requirements of the series for which his book was written. The only adverse criticism we have to make, therefore, is one of which the author may possibly be quite conscious: that the " influence" of Ovid is too sharply tabulated into influence here and influence there, instead of being shown as a continuity, as one of the most important currents of European civilization. For instance, "Ovid in the Middle Ages" has subdivisions (i.) Elegiac Comedies; (ii.) The Tale; (iii.) Vagabond Poetry; (iv.) Romance and Epic; (v.) Arts of Love and the Knightly Code; (vi.) Forgeries; (vii.) Transformations; (viii.) Dante and Chaucer. Our objection is that this tabulation illustrates the variety, but not the strength or importance, of Ovid's influence. For this dispersion we may partly accuse the exigencies of writing a primer to type, to be included in a series. Yet even in detail Professor Rand seems to slight certain very important events. He observes that "the spirit of Ovid the lover, chastened and refined, comes to Dante through the troubadours and the singers of the *dolce stil nuovo*"; he admits that in the verse of Dante it is exalted "to heights of which Ovid

never dreamed" [144]. But he does not make clear the nature of one of the most extraordinary and triumphant metamorphoses in the history of civilization: the fusion, in the work of Dante and his contemporaries, of Ovid with Christianity; of the Art of Love with the Worship of the Virgin; the formation consequently of the most complete and most exalted *erotic* (to coin a needed word) that the world has ever known. The history of the influence of Ovid is the history of the European *erotic* – by which we mean not "eroticism," but the conscious refinement and intensification of the sexual impulse – which is one of the great achievements of Europe. The history of the Art of Love lay perhaps outside of what Dr. Rand took to be his province in this book; nevertheless, it is noticeable that, while he gives due emphasis to the influence of Ovid upon Chaucer, he seems to underestimate Ovid's importance for Dante. Perhaps he is blinded by Dante's explicit devotion to Virgil; but certainly it is less than the truth to say that "Ovid hardly touched the spirit of Dante" [145]. But, after making every deduction or reservation, Professor Rand's book deserves much praise. And of the poetry of Ovid, apart from its influence, Dr. Rand shows sound judgment and an appreciative enjoyment uncommon at the present time.

NOTES

1. Edward Kennard Rand (1871-1945), professor of Latin at Harvard University, was the joint editor and translator of the *Opuscula sacra* [*Theological Tractates*] (ca. 512-21) and *De consolatione philosophiae* [*The Consolation of Philosophy*] (ca. 524) by the sixth-century philosopher Boethius (ca. 480-ca. 525/6).

2. The multivolume series, edited by American classicists for publishers in Boston and London, included monographs by distinguished European and American scholars, including Oxford classicist J. W. Mackail, who contributed *Virgil and His Meaning to the World of To-day* (1922); the Cambridge classicist J. T. Sheppard (1881-1968), who wrote *Aeschylus and Sophocles: Their Work and Influence* (1927), and the Cambridge classicist F. L. Lucas (1894-1967), who contributed *Euripides and His Influence* (1923). The liberal historian Guglielmo Ferrero (1871-1942), known for his six-volume *The Greatness and Decline of Rome* (1903-08), was under house arrest by fascist Black Shirts for refusing to leave Italy and was unable to contribute to the series as announced.

The Author of "The Burning Babe"

An unsigned review of *The Book of Robert Southwell* by Christobel M. Hood[1]

Oxford: Blackwell, 1926. Pp. vii + 157.

Times Literary Supplement, 1278 (29 July 1926) 508

Robert Southwell was the third son of a gentleman of good family in Norfolk; through his mother's family he was related to the Shelleys; and he was born in or about the year 1562. The family had arrived at considerable prosperity by the benevolence of Henry VIII and the spoliation of the monasteries; but Robert Southwell was sent as a boy to Douay to be educated by Jesuits. In Douay and in Paris his education bore fruit; and in 1578 he was admitted to the Society of Jesus. He occupied for some time a position in Rome, and in 1586 was sent as a missionary to England. In this very hazardous labour he passed the rest of his life, with one short interim of comparative security under the protection of the Countess of Arundel, to whom he was domestic chaplain.[2] In 1592 he was betrayed and apprehended; after sundry tortures he was confined for nearly three years in the Tower, and then hanged at Tyburn.[3] No suspicion of political intrigue or espionage seems ever to have attached to him: he was hanged solely as a Jesuit priest occupied in priestly functions in defiance of the law.

So much we learn from Mrs. Hood's biographical introduction to the devotional poems which Southwell wrote in his few moments of leisure. The story is one of great interest and introduces us to a group of people who are too little known. Mrs. Hood writes in sympathy with Father Southwell and his fellow-martyrs. The material is so interesting (besides being interestingly handled) that we regret the absence of a fuller bibliography. As a piece of editing and literary criticism the volume is less satisfactory. The poems included are only the shorter poems; they cover only 78 pages of large type (the whole volume, including the introduction, is 157 pages). So few of the poems are first rate that we regret that this edition is not a complete and more scholarly work. If the book was intended as a biography of a devout and courageous priest, a few of the poems might have been included as specimens; if the book was to be primarily of literary

interest, then the poetical works should have been given complete and some critical account of them attempted. We should like to know something about Father Southwell's reading and taste. If nothing is known, then it should be stated that nothing is known; but Mrs. Hood has only the unhelpful comment: "He was evidently well acquainted with the works of Shakespeare and other contemporaries" [76]. This is a pity, for the poetry of Southwell, if never first rate, is a document of some interest to the student of Elizabethan and especially of seventeenth-century metaphysical verse.

The poem chosen by that remarkable critic Ben Jonson is certainly the best;[4] for besides the specific qualities of Southwell's verse it has a directness and force of movement elsewhere absent. It is short enough to give entire:

> As I in hoary Winter's night stood shiveringe in the snowe,
> Surpris'd I was with sodayne heat, which made my hart to glowe;
> And liftinge upp a fearfull eye to vewe what fire was nere,
> A pretty Babe all burninge bright, did in the ayre appeare,
> Who scorchèd with excessive heate, such floodes of teares did shedd,
> As though His floodes should quench His flames which with His teares were fedd;
> Alas, quoth He, but newly borne, in fiery heates I frye,
> Yet none approch to warme their harts or feel my fire but I!
> My faultles brest the fornace is, the fuell woundinge thornes,
> Love is the fire, and sighes the smoke, the ashes shame and scornes;
> The fuell Justice layeth on, and Mercy blowes the coales,
> The metall in this fornace wrought are men's defilèd soules,
> For which, as nowe on fire I am, to worke them to their good,
> So will I melt into a bath to washe them in My bloode:
> With this He vanisht out of sight, and swiftly shroncke awaye,
> And straight I callèd unto mynde that it was Christmas-daye.

This is a genuine variation on the "fourteener," and a curious example of an antecedent of the "metaphysical" religious verse of the seventeenth century.[5] "Who scorchèd with excessive heate, such floodes of teares did shedd" is a line which foreshadows the *concettismo* of Crashaw, though it has nothing in common with that of Donne.[6] Reading the poems of Southwell, anyone acquainted with Signor Praz's important *Secentismo e Marinismo in Inghilterra* is likely to suspect that Southwell had more than

a slight knowledge of the Italian poetry, and the Jesuit poetry, both Latin and Italian, of his time.[7] It would be surprising if Father Southwell, a Jesuit who had passed some time in Rome, had not had such knowledge. Mrs. Hood, and the contemporaries whom she cites, speak of Southwell as "learned"; if we knew exactly what poetry was included in his learning, a link in comparative literature might be supplied.

Not that Southwell appears to have influenced either the contemporary or the following generation in English verse. But a fuller knowledge of his literary origins would bear testimony to the power of a mode of taste, then sweeping over Europe, though as yet less noticeable in England, which came to be called baroque. Southwell never has the intensity nor the frequent perversity of metaphor of Crashaw. His conceit is in such lines as

> Spell Eva backe and Ave shall yowe finde,
> The first beganne, the last reversd our harmes.[8]

Southwell is "baroque" more by his conformity to the spirit of Catholic religious verse of the time. His translation of St. Thomas Aquinas's *Lauda Sion* is more faithful to the spirit of medieval Latin verse than Crashaw's *Vexilla Regis*,[9] but in general we feel in his poetry that fusion or confusion of feeling of human and divine, that transposition of human sentiment to divine objects which characterizes the religious verse of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in contrast to that of the thirteenth century, in which the distinctions of feeling towards human objects and divine objects are preserved. The best example in English is Crashaw's St. Theresa, or his Mary Magdalen.[10] Southwell is a very different man from Crashaw; he is primarily the priest as man of action, and his verse is a by-product. Of all of these poems reprinted "The Burning Babe" pleases most by its directness and simplicity of imagery, "Dyer's Phancy" by its curious meditation on Sin.[11] Southwell occupies a place in an important movement of sensibility, and the whole of his verse should be studied by those who are interested in the poetry of the generation which followed his.

NOTES

1. Christobel M. Hood (1886-1960), a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and editor of *Norfolk Archaeology* from 1922 to 1935.

2. Before his arrest and imprisonment, Southwell took up residence as chaplain and confessor in Arundel House, the London residence of Anne Dacres, Countess of Arundel (1557-1630), whose husband Philip Howard, poet, recusant, and friend of Southwell, was then imprisoned in the Tower.

3. Hood quotes a witness to the hanging of Southwell from the Tyburn Tree gallows at Hyde Park on 21 Feb 1595: "The unskilful hangman had not applied the noose of the rope to the proper place, so that [Southwell] several times made the sign of the cross whilst he was hanging, and was some time before he was strangled; which some perceiving, drew him by the legs to put an end to his pain . . . After he was dead he was cut down, bowelled and quartered" (62-63).

4. William Drummond of Hawthornden relates Jonson's admiration for "The Burning Babe": "That Southwell was hanged yett so he had written that piece of his the burning babe he would have been content to destroy many of his." TSE may recall this account from his Bodley Head Quartos edition of *Discoveries 1641: Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden, 1619* (London: John Lane, 1923), 9, or from his recently acquired edition of Jonson's *Works*, vol 1, ed. C.H. Herford and Percy Simpson (Oxford: Clarendon, 1925), 28.

5. Fourteener: a verse line consisting of fourteen syllables, usually in iambic meter, favored in the sixteenth century and used frequently for translations such as Golding's *Metamorphoses* and Chapman's *Iliad*.

6. *Concettismo*: a poetic style popular in seventeenth-century Italy and Spain characterized by the use of *concetti* ("conceits"). TSE derived the term from Praz, who uses it in relation to Donne's poetry in *Secentismo e marinismo in Inghilterra* (125, 135).

7. TSE reviewed Praz's *Secentismo e marinismo in Inghilterra* in "An Italian Critic on Donne and Crashaw" (596) and drew upon it heavily in his Clark Lectures.

8. The opening lines of Southwell's "Our Ladie's Salutation."

9. Southwell's English translation of Aquinas's Eucharistic hymn, *Lauda Sion Salvatorem* (ca. 1264, for the Mass of Corpus Christi), is titled "A Holy Hymne" in the first edition (1595); the title that Hood uses is from the manuscript copy, "Saint Thomas of Aquines Hymne Read on Corpus Christy Daye." For TSE's discussion of Crashaw's "Vexilla Regis, the Hymn of the Holy Crosse" (1648) and his comparison of it with the original *Vexilla regis prodeunt* of Fortunatus, see his sixth Clark Lecture (709).

10. For TSE's discussion of "Sainte Mary Magdalene or The Weeper," "A Hymn to the Name and Honour of the Admirable Saint Teresa," and "Upon the Book and Picture of the Seraphical Saint Teresa," see his Clark lecture on Crashaw (710).

11. Southwell's "Dyer's Phancy Turned to a Sinner's Complainte," which circulated in manuscript before its first printing in 1602, is a parody of Sir Edward Dyer's "The Song in the Oake" (1575).

Plague Pamphlets[1]

An unsigned review of *The Plague Pamphlets of Thomas Dekker*, ed. F. P. Wilson

Oxford: Clarendon, 1925. Pp. xxix + 263.

Times Literary Supplement, 1279 (5 Aug 1926) 522

The literature of Plague is not a large one – for the English reader there hardly exist more than Defoe's Journal and Poe's "Masque of the Red Death"[2] – and we may be grateful to Mr. Wilson for reprinting these pieces of prose and verse. They will not, for the most part, add much to Dekker's reputation. Most of them, it is true, are here printed for the first time since the original publication; and one of the most interesting, *The Meeting of Gallants at an Ordinarie*, is a new ascription by Mr. Wilson – an ascription which, judging only on grounds of style, we see no reason to question.[3] All the prose pieces appear to have been written hurriedly as pamphlets to satisfy a transient public demand. None is equal in interest or workmanship to *The Guls Hornebooke* or *The Belman of London*;[4] and Dekker's place as a prose writer will remain where it was, considerably below that of Nashe; but as contributions to the study of Plague literature these are of very great interest.

The two examples mentioned above gain their effect by structure and by their rates of speed. Poe produces his effect by suddenness and what may be called "expected surprise," united with a moral idea of retribution. Defoe's effect is due to an aggregation of small detail producing final unity. The tone of every anecdote is projected into the next, and so on. One is continuously the spectator of the slow creeping of infection from parish to parish, of a more and more intolerable movement which one can neither arrest nor accelerate. Dekker has no movement whatever; his pamphlets are a collection of vague anecdotes interspersed with passages of the purple meditation in which his age indulged itself. The difference between Dekker and Defoe is partly due to the fact that in Dekker's age there were few statistics, whilst in Defoe's time public statistics of some pretence to accuracy were at hand. Defoe is, as we all know, immensely indebted to the Weekly Bills, both for statements of fact and for those figures of the numbers of

deaths without which the peculiar movement of his Journal would have been impossible.[5] Statistics form the skeleton of the Journal; Defoe was one of the first to attempt and to succeed in that boasted enterprise of "making statistics interesting." And Defoe had a further advantage: his age, and that of which he wrote, had higher standards of medical observation, and the records of this observation inevitably influenced literary style: the *Loimologia* of Dr. Hodges, to which Defoe presumably had access, is an example.[6]

We must take these considerations into account in criticizing Dekker. They go to explain the difference of use to which he puts the anecdote, and the differences of detail within the anecdote itself. But there is another difference between Dekker and Defoe, which makes us find for Dekker a distant relationship to Boccaccio, and a nearer relationship to the ordinary teller of *fabliaux*.[7] For Defoe the plague is a "visitation," virtually a sign from Jehovah of His wrath; for Dekker it is merely the occasion for meditation upon death and the brevity and uncertainty of human life, and for tales which are as often as not "merry" ones. One of the most interesting of the pamphlets is *The Meeting of Gallants at an Ordinarie*, one of those meetings of gallants which he or Middleton could deal with so readily in a comedy. The gallants are named, as we might expect, Signors Shuttlecocke, Ginglespurre, Stramazon and Kickshow. As the last of these gentlemen remarks, "I love to heare Tales when a merrie Corpulent Host bandies them out of his Flopmouth" [119]; and the host, the traditional comic figure, treats his "Gallant Bullyes of five and twenty" first to a tale of a vintner in London, dying in a humour: "such a ridiculous humour of dying was never heard of before" [123]. But even the more "pathetical" tales are lighter than Defoe's; they may end with a moral, they are careless of the great moral of Defoe, they belong to a more reckless and a tougher world. In *The Wonderfull Yeare* is a tale of a bride taken ill of the plague at the altar:

> Now was his divination true, she was a wife, yet continued a mayd; he was a husband and a widower, yet never knew his wife: she was his owne, yet he had her not: she had him, yet never enjoyed him: heere is a strange alteration, for the Rosemary that was washt in sweete water to set out the Bridall, is now wet in teares to furnish her buriall: the Musick that was heard to sound forth dances cannot now be heard for the ringing of bels: all the comfort that happened to either side being this, that he lost

> her, before she had time to be an ill wife, and she left him, ere he was able to be a bad husband. [46]

The tone of the last clause of this sentence is enough to mark the difference of worlds between Dekker and Defoe; and the sentiment of the whole passage might fill a tragedy by Fletcher and Ford. The next tale – that of the cobbler's wife who, in dying, "confessed all" to her husband: and then recovered – is like a more scurrilous *Merry Wives*:[8] other ladies came "with nailes sharpned for the nonce like cattes"; but in the end "all anger on every side was powred into a pottle-pot, and there burnt to death" [51].

We receive indeed – and this is perhaps the great interest and value of these reprints of Dekker's Plague Pamphlets – a vivid impression of a world utterly different from Defoe's, a world before puritanism, with its alteration of the individual conscience and its burden of personal responsibility. It is also the world of the Elizabethan dramatists, and of Donne – Donne in his more rhetorical and less theological moods.

> What an unmatchable torment were it for a man to be bard up every night in a vast silent Charnell-house? hung (to make it more hideous) with lamps dimly & slowly burning, in hollow and glimmering corners: where all the pavement should in stead of greene rushes, be strewde with blasted Rosemary, withered Hyacinthes, fatall Cipresse and Ewe, thickly mingled with heapes of dead mens bones: the bare ribbes of a father that begat him, lying there: here the Chaples hollow scull of a mother that bore him: round about him a thousand Coarses, some standing bolt upright in their knotted winding sheetes: others halfe mouldred in rotten Coffins, that should suddenly yawne wide open, filling his nosthrils with noysome stench, and his eyes with the sight of nothing but crawling wormes. And to keepe such a poore wretch waking, he should hear no noise but of Toads croaking, Screech-Owles howling, Mandrakes shrieking. . . . [27]

This passage is also from *The Wonderfull Yeare*; its imagery, its structure (with innumerable colons) is typical of the age in which the mandrake shrieked. It appeared a hundred and twenty years before the work of Defoe.[9]

NOTES

1. TSE wrote to Bruce Richmond on 18 Feb: "I hope to get the Dekker done in a week or so, but I want to re-read Defoe first" (*L3* 84). F. P. Wilson (1889-1963), Reader in English Literature

at Oxford, was also completing *The Plague in Shakespeare's London* (1927). Elizabethan playwright and pamphleteer Thomas Dekker (ca. 1572-1632).

2. *A Journal of the Plague Year* by Daniel Defoe (ca. 1659-1731), was published in 1772. In Edgar Allan Poe's gothic short story (1842), Prince Prospero and his nobles attempt to escape the plague by hiding in his Abbey and holding a masquerade ball, at which appears a mysterious guest (the Red Death), who kills them all.

3. Wilson argues that the pamphlet, previously printed but without ascription to any author, is more in the style and manner of Dekker than that of "T. M." [Thomas Middleton], with whom Dekker collaborated on *The Honest Whore* (1604): "But it is perhaps unsafe to go beyond this conclusion: that if *The Meeting of Gallants* is not Dekker's, it is T. M.'s, if indeed it is not, like *The Honest Whore*, a work of collaboration" (xx).

4. Dekker's popular satirical tracts, *The Guls Horne-booke* (1609) and *The Belman of London* (1608). TSE owned the Temple Classics edition of the two works, *The Guls Hornbook, and the Belman of London in Two Parts* (London: J. M. Dent, 1904).

5. The Bills of Mortality, first compiled by the Parish Clerk John Bell in *London's Remembrancer* (1665) were included in John Graunt's *Reflections on the Weekly Bills* in the same year. According to Wilson, Graunt's book, reprinted in 1720, probably provided Defoe with his statistics.

6. Physician Nathaniel Hodges (1629-88) remained in London during the plague year to make observations, test medical treatments, and gather statistics on victims for his treatise, *Loimologia; or, An Historical Account of the Plague in London in 1665, with Precautionary Directions against the Like Contagion*, published in Latin in 1672, in English translation in 1720.

7. *fabliaux* (pl. of *fabliau*): a twelfth-century French genre of short, comic, bawdy tales, reworked by Chaucer in the *Canterbury Tales* ("The Miller's Tale") and by Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-75) in the *Decameron* (ca. 1353), a collection of stories told by young aristocrats in a country villa outside plague-ravaged Florence in 1348. Dekker drew upon Boccaccio's tale of Griselda for his comedy *Patient Grissel* (1603), written with Henry Chettle and William Haughton.

8. Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1602).

9. TSE had recently acquired the Bodley Head Quartos edition of *The Wonderfull Yeare 1603* (London: John Lane, 1924); the copy in his library is signed "Thos Eliot 1924."

Creative Criticism

An unsigned review of *Creative Criticism: Essays on the Unity of Genius and Taste*, by J. E. Spingarn

London: Humphrey Milford, [1925]. Pp. 138.

Times Literary Supplement, 1280 (12 Aug 1926) 535

Mr. J. E. Spingarn is the author of an excellent informative book on the literary criticism of the Italian Renaissance;[1] he is a scholarly critic who is entitled to be listened to with respect. In this book, however, it would seem that Mr. Spingarn, who at one time was professor of literature in an American university, was determined to assert, even a little boisterously, his emancipation from the scholastic and academic point of view. Dedication to Croce, "the most original of all modern thinkers on Art," and the motto from Barbey d'Aurevilly, "Who can doubt that Criticism, as well as Poetry, can have wings?" are both significant.[2] Mr. Spingarn, after Croce, is also an original "thinker on art"; but "freedom" is not, as Mr. Spingarn seems to think, the one thing needful for criticism. Mr. Spingarn's criticism has certainly realized the possibility suggested by Barbey d'Aurevilly: it has wings; unfortunately, like the fabulous bird of paradise, it has wings but no feet, and can never settle. Dr. Spingarn's first essay, on "The New Criticism," is a recitation of all the distinctions and classifications which art and criticism are now to repudiate.[3] For Mr. Spingarn the phrase "self-expression" appears to be completely adequate.

> What has the poet tried to do, and how has he fulfilled his intention? What is he striving to express and how has he expressed it? What impression does his work make on me, and how can I best express this impression? [21-22]

The dogmas of "The New Criticism" (for dogmas they are) run somewhat as follows, in extracts from Mr. Spingarn's essay:

> We have done with all the old Rules . . .We have done with the *genres*, or literary kinds . . . there are as many kinds as there are individual poets . . . All art is lyrical . . . We have done with the theory of style, with

> metaphor, simile, and all the paraphernalia of Graeco-Roman rhetoric . . . We have done with all moral judgment of literature . . .[4]

Mr. Spingarn has what is called "infectious high spirits." The test, of course, of any critical programme or platform, such as his, is the sort of criticism which it produces. Unfortunately, all of the essays in this small book are of the same general order, and with some variety of gesture hail the dawn of "creative criticism" without providing any specimens of it. Mr. Spingarn has scholarship and some taste, and this book is by no means a fair representative of his work; it is to be hoped that he will support his theories, or his faiths, by a work of concrete criticism.

We must take exception, however, to his term "The New Criticism," which seems a misnomer. It implies that this is the creed of the youngest critics of importance, which is far from being the case. The younger critics, or some of them – witness Mr. Ramon Fernandez in France and Mr. Herbert Read in this country – have by no means done with "all moral judgment of literature"; on the contrary, they seem to be resuscitating it to a new and different life.[5]

NOTES

1. Finished by 6 July, when TSE wrote to Bruce Richmond upon returning from Paris, "I was relieved to see that my review of Spingarn was not printed in my absence, as it gave me the opportunity to correct in proof what seemed to me an error of taste" (*L3* 210). J. E. Spingarn (1875-1939) was professor of comparative literature at Columbia University from 1899 to 1911. The American edition of his *Creative Criticism* had appeared in 1917. TSE also owned and marked a copy of Spingarn's *A History of Literary Criticism in the Renaissance* (New York: Columbia UP, 1908), inscribed "Thomas Eliot, 1909" (Houghton).

2. "Qui se doutait . . . que la Critique pût, comme la Poésie, avoir des ailes?" from Barbey d'Aurevilly's *Littérature étrangère* [Foreign Literature], vol 12 of *Les Œuvres et les hommes* [Works and Men], (Paris: Lemerre, 1891), 279.

3. "The New Criticism," which argues that the critic must bring both aesthetic judgment and the creative instinct to the work of art, was delivered as a lecture at Columbia in 1910.

4. Respectively, pages 24, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31.

5. See TSE's review of Read's *Reason and Romanticism: Essays in Literary Criticism* and Fernandez's *Messages* in "Mr. Read and M. Fernandez" (834).

Chaucer's "Troilus"[1]

An unsigned review of *The Book of Troilus and Criseyde* by Geoffrey Chaucer. Edited from all the known manuscripts by Robert Kilburn Root

London: Humphrey Milford, 1926. Pp. lxxxix + 573.

Times Literary Supplement, 1281 (19 Aug 1926) 547

There would be every reason for welcoming a new edition of Chaucer's *Troilus* even were it far less scholarly and critical than Dr. Root's. Within the last ten or fifteen years our attitude towards Chaucer has changed; it is one of those inconspicuous but important changes which are not immediately registered in the manuals of literary history. The nominal position of Chaucer has always been high enough, and is hardly affected. But it has been similar to that of the "medieval" philosophers, whose works have so long been summarized but not read; even some of his admirers have hampered his appreciation by their devotion to medievalism and to that illegible font of type known as black-letter.[2] But we are becoming slowly more aware of Chaucer as a part of English literature, at the same time that we are learning to take the "medieval" a little more seriously. And accordingly we are becoming aware that the whole stock of critical commonplaces about Chaucer must be reinventoried. Those who approach Chaucer in this new spirit recognize that the centre for critical judgment of Chaucer is not the Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales* (of which, like the *Illiad* and the *Aeneid*, everybody can quote the first line), but decidedly *Troilus and Criseyde*. Hence the importance of a new edition of this poem by itself.

Dr. Root, who by his thoroughgoing methods would appear to have been a pupil of George Lyman Kittredge, has apparently superannuated all previous editions.[3] Dr. Root reminds us that Skeat recognized two main "families" of manuscripts, but objects that the manuscripts closely collated by Skeat were of the same "family" (Cl. and Cp.).[4] He pays acknowledgment to Sir William McCormick, the editor of *Troilus* in the Globe edition:[5] "In this edition, for the first time, the text of the poem rests on a

thorough examination of all the MSS." [lxx]; and justifies his own edition (apart from certain differences of opinion of the relative value of manuscripts) on the ground that the Globe was a popular edition, and that therefore only a minimum of critical apparatus was possible. Dr. Root's book, with text, apparatus, notes, and introductions, amounts to 573 pages. He has not stinted himself; he has made an admirable edition.

For this we should be very grateful. There are few literary reputations more in need of revision than that of Chaucer, or than that of *Troilus* relative to his other work. And for this revision the mere physical aid of possessing this poem in a separate volume – were the volume even merely an ordinary text, and not the fine critical text which Dr. Root has given us – is of great value. What is needed now is an edition of the works of Chaucer separately and in small convenient volumes, somewhat like the Temple edition of Shakespeare.[6] Many of us, probably, owe our personal opinions of the plays of Shakespeare partly to the opportunity to take one play at a time, as in the Temple and other editions, and study it by itself: and the work of Chaucer would gain in the same presentation. Until such an edition is made, the *Troilus* of Dr. Root will be necessary, not only to the literary specialist but to every serious student of English literature.

Undoubtedly *Troilus and Criseyde* has suffered for other reasons than the lack of a separate volume. It is a narrative poem, and a long one. It has no picaresque or romantic interest; it is not a "tale." It has no anecdote or neat point: an acquaintance with the *Canterbury Tales* is no preparation for such a book. Its sobriety and restraint are extreme: few brilliant lines are detachable from the weft of the work. A knowledge of Stendhal might provide the best introduction; but the majority of readers of novels have their taste impaired by an indulgence in visual detail. And Chaucer suffers from another handicap due to his place and time. He was an English Catholic long before the Reformation – superficially more remote from us in religious sensibility than either Dante or Shakespeare. For Dante remains continuous with a religious tradition which persists, however modified; and Shakespeare (whatever his personal allegiance, of which there is some doubt) is not alien to the subsequent Protestant tradition of English literature. This difficulty exists for any reader, whether he be himself Protestant or Catholic. But it is a difficulty which we must overcome, if we are to enjoy the fruits and derive the benefits; and we must not look abroad for critical aid or interpretation. It is hardly too much to say that Chaucer is difficult for a Continental because he is an Englishman, and difficult for an

Englishman because he is pre-Reformation – because he belongs naturally and quite locally to the main body of European thought.

For Chaucer's religious attitude is implicit nowhere more than throughout the poem of *Troilus*. To call it "medieval" is merely to frighten off possible readers with the suggestion that it expounds a remote and antiquated sensibility. This sensibility need be neither remote nor antiquated: it is another form (and a quite distinct form) of that assimilation of Ovid into Christianity upon which is based the medieval theory of Love.[7] It may be said without exaggeration that *Troilus and Criseyde* is a document second in importance, in its kind, only to the *Vita Nuova*. It is a pendant to the latter, and the two are perfectly consistent. Nothing is more striking than the difference between the Troilus of Chaucer and the Troilus of Shakespeare. The latter is the passing fury of a prodigious and for the moment irresponsible Titan, working his way almost blindly through destruction towards his own ends. The former is the sober statement of a man who was a member of a spiritual (we do not mean ecclesiastical) community who had already arrived as far as he was to go. In Chaucer's poem there is no moral judgment either upon Criseyde or upon Troilus, or upon Pandarus;[8] only a high dispassionate view of the place of these persons in a fixed and firm moral order. The author of a recent novel of great interest, *Sous le Soleil de Satan*, observes that "l'expérience n'est pour la plupart des hommes . . . que le terme d'un long voyage autour de leur propre néant."[9] What prevents *Troilus* from being merely an illustration of this statement is the eventual elevation of the soul of Troilus to the "eighth sphere." This is not, as it may appear to many readers, simply the hurried combination of a tired story-teller aided by conventional piety. Troilus is not hoisted to heaven in a machine; his ascent is an explicit and required statement of the sense of the whole poem.

> And whan that he was slayn in this manere,
> His lighte goost ful blisfully is went
> Up to the holughnesse of the eighte spere . . .
>
> And down from thennes faste he gan avyse
> This litel spot of erthe, that with the se
> Embraced is, and fully gan despise
> This wrecched world, and held al vanite
> To respect of the pleyn felicite
> That is in hevene above; and at the laste,
> Ther he was slayn, his lokyng down he caste.

And in hym self he lough right at the wo
Of hem that wepten for his deth so faste,
And dampned al oure werk that folweth so
The blynde lust, the which that may nat laste . . .[10]

In the introduction to this edition, where Dr. Root, in spite of his disclaimers, makes some comments which are excellent literary criticism, there are some penetrating remarks on this point.

NOTES

1. When Bruce Richmond offered for review a translation of Montaigne or the edition of Chaucer, TSE replied on 23 July: "I am certainly not prepared to tackle a long review about Montaigne. . . . I confess, however, that the book on Troilus attracts me more and I should like to do that" (*L3* 217). The *TLS* heading gives only the English edition, but TSE's review copy, with his bookplate, was of the American edition (Princeton: Princeton UP), no markings. Robert Kilburn Root (1877-1950), professor of English at Princeton University, had previously published *Manuscripts of Chaucer's Troilus* (1914) and *The Textual Tradition of Chaucer's Troilus* (1916).

2. The black-letter or Old English typeface, based on early manuscript lettering, was used in the Gutenberg Bible and in early editions of Chaucer through the reissue in 1687 of Thomas Speght's 1602 edition of the works. The switch to roman type was made in 1721, but a reversion to black-letter occurred in later editions. "We have long since abandoned the notion," writes Root, "current in the seventeenth century, that the text of Chaucer should be printed in black-letter type" (lxxxvii).

3. Root pays tribute to the Harvard scholar George Lyman Kittredge (1860-1941) for his work on Chaucer, expressing a "particular obligation" to his *The Date of Chaucer's Troilus* (1909), but he identifies the Old English scholar Albert S. Cook of Yale as his editorial mentor.

4. The larger of the two families of manuscripts recognized by philologist Walter Skeat (1835-1912) comprised the Campsall (Cl), Corpus Christi (Cp), and Harleian 2280 (H1) manuscripts, the smaller of the Cambridge manuscript (Cm[Gg]), as representative of the type. As Root explains, the text of *Troilus* in Skeat's *Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* (1894) "is based on 'a close collation of Cl and Cp, taking Cl as the foundation, but correcting it by Cp throughout" (lxix).

5. Sir William S. McCormick (1859-1930), professor of English at St. Andrews, pioneer in the textual study of *Troilus*, and frequent collaborator with Root, provided Root with his collations of authoritative editions for this edition. The Globe edition of *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, under the general editorship of Professor Alfred W. Pollard, had appeared in 1908.

6. TSE had been acquiring since boyhood the thirty-eight volumes of the Temple Shakespeare (London: J. M. Dent, 1901-29) that are in his library, many of which contain his bookplate and signature.

7. TSE referred to the medieval fusion of Ovid with Christianity as "one of the most extraordinary and triumphant metamorphoses in the history of civilization" in "The Influence of Ovid" (796).

8. As Root describes Pandarus – Criseyde's uncle, companion of Troilus, and unsuccessful courtly lover – "he is untiring in his disinterested and loyal service, even when that service involves his own dishonor. For though the artificial code of courtly love blames Criseyde only for her final falseness to Troilus, it quite irrationally demands that her uncle be her jealous guardian" (xxxiii).

9. *Trans:* "for most men experience . . . means no more than the term of a long journey round their own void." From *Sous le soleil de Satan* (Paris: Plon, 1926), 199, the first novel of Georges Bernanos (1888-1948). Trans. Pamela Morris, *The Star of Satan* (New York: Macmillan, 1940), 186.

10. Book V, from stanzas 259, 260, 261 (403).

American Prose

An unsigned review of *The Outlook for American Prose*
by Joseph Warren Beach
Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1926. Pp. vii + 285.

S. P. E. Tract No. XXIV, which includes *Notes on Relative Clauses*, by Otto Jespersen, and *American Slang*
by Fred Newton Scott
Oxford: Clarendon, 1926. Pp. 103-17, 118-27.

Times Literary Supplement, 1283 (2 Sept 1926) 577

The title of Mr. Beach's book is, we imagine, one which should encourage the sale of the book in America. It reflects faithfully the attitude of a large part of the literary public in America – an attitude of determination and confidence in the future, with an acute consciousness of the shortcomings of the present. But the title is unfair to the book, which contains not only a great deal of valuable criticism of the present in America but some good criticism of the present in England. And this book is interesting, beyond the interest of its subject matter, in its critical method. Mr. Beach will be a useful critic in America, he would be a useful critic here; for he is a critic with an equipment which is rare: that is, an understanding of the principles of grammar and language.[1]

American books, especially American novels, have been received in England in the last few years with a leniency which has sometimes exceeded the limits of critical tolerance or sporting generosity. We are inclined to relax even those mild critical standards which still endure for the writing of English in England. One of the writers who have flourished on this amiability is Mr. Joseph Hergesheimer, and Mr. Hergesheimer is one of those authors upon whom Mr. Beach falls most heavily (with occasional side-blows, which do not fail of their object, at Mr. Walpole and Mr. Swinnerton across the sea).[2] After pointing out a number of the appalling crimes committed by Mr. Dreiser and Mr. Hergesheimer the critic pauses to ask –

> Is it simply that our Dreisers and Hergesheimers are not born to the use of English, and that Indiana and Pennsylvania have failed to supply the deficiency? [170]

This suggestion he is forced to discard as inadequate. For Joseph Conrad English was a more alien tongue than for Dreiser or for Hergesheimer. True, Conrad makes mistakes; his English style, as Mr. Beach points out, is by no means so perfect as the conventional praise of Conrad might lead us to suppose; but Conrad's mistakes are of a different kind, and much more readily pardonable. Conrad did not master all the refinements of the language; Mr. Beach points out his clumsiness in the frequent use of *could* or *would* instead of *might*. These are mysteries which to a foreigner must be nearly impenetrable; but the sin (we may suggest in passing) is rather with ourselves for failing to discount these weaknesses of Conrad, and then to estimate him on his indubitable merit, than with Conrad for the commission. But the errors of a Hergesheimer or a Dreiser are quite different. Mr. Dreiser, for instance, has this phrase: "the mystic chords which bind and thrill the heart of the nation."[3] Here, Mr. Beach shows us, there is a downright confusion between "cords" which bind and "chords" which thrill [172]. And furthermore, the phrase is itself mere rubbish; not the "American language," not even specifically "American" rubbish, but universal bad writing. And Mr. Beach quotes a sentence from Hergesheimer with the remark that we never find in Conrad such a "psychological jargon":

> The movement, the anxiety, she dreaded was arriving, and it found her no freer of doubt than had the other aspects of her own responses. [172]

Yet Mr. Beach is quite balanced in judgment. His censure of such writers as Dreiser and Hergesheimer does not lead him to exaggerate the merits of other American writers who are innocent of grammatical or rhetorical blunders. He agrees that Miss Cather and Mr. Dell write better than this.[4] But, he ponders,

> The better taste of Miss Cather and Mr. Dell would give us more comfort if we felt certain they were writers of equal force with Mr. Dreiser and Mr. Hergesheimer. That is why our problem is an anxious one. [173]

On all of the writers with whom he deals Mr. Beach has something of interest to say; and everything that he says has also (for us) an interest exceeding the interest of the subject. His destructive analysis of some specimens of

Professor John Dewey's thought (from a book by Professor Dewey entitled exactly *How We Think*) brings a good deal of light upon the dark labyrinths of the American philosophical mind.[5]

We are impressed, reading Mr. Beach's criticism and the quotations from the authors whom he criticizes, that none of these eminent men of letters seems to employ, or to be engaged in the formation of, that curious chimera "the American language." "The American language" – if by that is meant a possible literary vehicle of thought and feeling, and not merely the transient slang of the time – must exist chiefly in the patriotic mind of Mr. Mencken, a journalist, by the way, whom Mr. Beach shows to be capable of writing extremely good, straightforward English prose.[6]

That "American language," indeed, is a ghost which walks only when the lights are very low. Mr. Beach turns the light on to several apparitions of the ghost, and reveals much bad language and a little good language, but nothing positively "American." But we are told that there is a peculiar American vocabulary of racy popular speech. In the S. P. E. Tract No. xxiv Professor Fred Newton Scott gives a list of eight pages of current American slang, with definitions.[7] Of the list, the editor has noted twenty-three instances as known or familiar in England. His estimate is conservative, for readers of magazine fiction already know and employ the verb to *double-cross*. (This useful and expressive word is already in decay; its original meaning of a betrayal of *both* sides is reduced to plain betrayal, which renders it superfluous.) Furthermore, the editor states that he has omitted fifty-two words because they are already part of the British vocabulary. Of the other words that remain a few are pretty certain to be adopted in this country. *Bootlegger* is a word that has no equivalent, and is used here whenever we have occasion to refer to that industry. It is the first in the field, and will probably survive later inventions. *Blurb* (publisher's notice on the wrapper or jacket of a book) is qualified by the editor himself as [an] "admirable word, indispensable." The word *dope*, after an eccentric history (including the history of its derivatives: very few persons remember that *doper*, or *horn-doper*, means "individual," "person," whereas *dopester* is "tipster"), has now settled down, here as in America, to mean "poisonous or forbidden drugs" (not, as Professor Scott says, "poison"). A few words already have English equivalents (*piker* is strictly a person who cadges drinks, not merely a "low-down, untrustworthy person"). Some are only doubtfully slang (*caboodle*, meaning a group, lot, set, is probably dialect, like the Southern *kitnbilin* – "kettle and boiling" – with similar meaning); to *sit in*, meaning to take part in, is

an expression proper to the game of poker. Possibly *bellhop*, more expressive than bellboy or hotel page, may survive; certain words, like the verb *to boost*, and its substantive *booster*, reflect aspects of contemporary American life so accurately as to obtain a documentary value. But the majority of the words and phrases (especially the phrases) are inherently transitory. One class is that of synonyms, which can retain their value only so long as they retain some novelty, and which are certain to be superseded by later inventions: the synonyms for "money" (*bones, bucks, iron men*, for "dollars") and the synonyms for strong liquors and for intoxication (*hooch* means rather illicit liquor, and succeeds the antiquated *moonshine*) are certain to pass away. So are the innumerable terms of opprobrium, which have their Elizabethan and Jacobean analogues (*e.g.; bonehead, boob, simp, skate, dub, zob*). The more elaborate metaphors cannot endure (*soup and fish* for "evening dress").

There remains one important class of locutions, that of simple and emphatic verbal phrases. (To this class belong *come across, fall for, get away with, get by with, get the bulge on, put across, put over*). This is perhaps the class which must be most seriously reckoned with. It does not represent the evolution of a new language so much as the degradation of an old one. Every language contains its own potentiality of deterioration, and the tendency illustrated by these verbal phrases exists, independently, in this country: notice the success, among certain classes in England, of *phone through* instead of *telephone* or the acceptable *ring up*. We can strive against this tendency more competently if we recognize that it is indigenous. For the rest – as Mr. Beach's book and a rapid examination of American slang combine to show – America is not likely to develop a new language until its civilization becomes much more complicated and more refined than that of Britain; and there are no indications that this will ever happen. Meanwhile, America will continue to provide a small number of new words which can usefully be digested by the parent language.[8]

NOTES

1. Joseph Warren Beach (1880-1957), professor of English at the University of Minnesota and author of *The Method of Henry James* (1918). TSE had published Beach's "The Socratic Virtues of Irving Babbitt" in the *New Criterion* of June 1926.

2. Beach criticizes the American novelist Joseph Hergesheimer (1880-1954) for his overuse of favorite words in *The Three Black Pennys* (1917) and *Cytherea* (1922), and for the "fussy and ostentatious and often unintelligible" prose in his book on Cuba, *San Cristóbal de la Habana* (1920). He is equally severe with the English novelists Frank Swinnerton (1884-1982) and Hugh

Walpole (1854-1929) for their overuse of "devastating," the "word of the year in 1922," Swinnerton in *The Three Lovers* (1922), Walpole in *The Cathedral* (1922).

3. From the first novel, *Sister Carrie* (1900), chapter IX, by Theodore Dreiser (1871-1945).

4. American novelists Willa Cather (1873-1947) and Floyd Dell (1887-1969). Beach also quotes with admiration a passage from Cather's "The Diamond Mind" in her collection of stories, *Youth and the Bright Medusa* (1920).

5. Beach criticizes Dewey for the "looseness in expression" and imprecision of language in his *How We Think* (1910), using Dewey's recognition as a writer of "serious character" to summarize the state of American prose: "As Chaucer has it, 'And if gold rust, what shall iron do?' And so we have a plain indication of one of the reasons for the inferiority of American prose-writing to that of England or France. It is a simple lack of intellectual discipline" (52).

6. In discussing the discrepancies between American and British English in *The American Language* (1919), H. L. Mencken explores the evolution and distinguishing characteristics of American English, its regional expressions, dialects, and slang.

7. The Society for Pure English (S. P. E.) was founded in England in 1913 in the attempt to counteract what members like Logan Pearsall Smith regarded as degenerative tendencies in English-language usage. The society issued its first tract in 1919 and by 1920 was actively recruiting American members and contributors. The American educator and rhetorician Fred Newton Scott (1860-1931) founded and served as head of the Department of Rhetoric at the University of Michigan from 1903 to 1927.

8. Though TSE did not review the listed work by the Danish grammarian of English Otto Jespersen, he had recently acquired for his library Jespersen's *Language: Its Nature, Development and Origin*, 3rd edn. (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1925), and soon reviewed his *The Philosophy of Grammar* (1924) in the *Criterion* for Jan 1927. Jespersen was known for his seven-volume *A Modern English Grammar on Historical Principles* (1909-49).

Lancelot Andrewes[1]

The Right Reverend Father in God, Lancelot Bishop of Winchester, died on September 25, 1626. During his lifetime he enjoyed a distinguished reputation for the excellence of his sermons, for the conduct of his diocese, for his ability in controversy displayed against Cardinal Bellarmine,[2] and for the decorum and devotion of his private life. Some years after Andrewes's death Lord Clarendon, in his *History of the Rebellion*, expressed regret that Andrewes had not been chosen instead of Abbott to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, for thus affairs in England might have taken a different course.[3] By authorities on the history of English Church Andrewes is still accorded a high, perhaps the highest, place; among persons interested in devotion his *Private Prayers* are not unknown. But among those persons who read sermons, if they read them at all, as specimens of English prose, Andrewes is little known. His sermons are too well built to be readily quotable; they stick too closely to the point to be entertaining. Yet they rank with the finest English prose of their time, of any time. Before attempting to remove the remains of his reputation to a last resting place in the dreary cemetery of literature, it is desirable to remind the reader of Andrewes's position in history.

The Church of England is the creation not of the reign of Henry VIII or of the reign of Edward VI, but of the reign of Elizabeth. The *via media* which is the spirit of Anglicanism was the spirit of Elizabeth in all things; the last of the humble Welsh family of Tudor was the first and most complete incarnation of English policy. The taste or sensibility of Elizabeth, developed by her intuitive knowledge of the right policy for the hour and her ability to choose the right men to carry out that policy, determined the future of the English Church. In its persistence in finding a mean between Papacy and Presbytery the English Church under Elizabeth became something representative of the finest spirit of England of the time. It came to reflect not only the personality of Elizabeth herself, but the best community of her subjects of every rank. Other religious impulses, of varying degrees of spiritual value, were to assert themselves with greater vehemence during the next two reigns. But the Church at the end of the reign of Elizabeth, and as developed in certain directions under the next reign, was

a masterpiece of ecclesiastical statesmanship. The same authority that made use of Gresham, and of Walsingham, and of Cecil, appointed Parker to the Archbishopric of Canterbury; the same authority was later to appoint Whitgift to the same office.[4]

To the ordinary cultivated student of civilization the genesis of a Church is of little interest, and at all events we must not confound the history of a Church with its spiritual meaning. To the ordinary observer the English Church in history means Hooker and Jeremy Taylor – and should mean Andrewes also: it means George Herbert, and it means the churches of Christopher Wren. This is not an error: a Church is to be judged by its intellectual fruits, by its influence on the sensibility of the most sensitive and on the intellect of the most intelligent, and it must be made real to the eye by monuments of artistic merit. The English Church has no literary monument equal to that of Dante, no intellectual monument equal to that of St. Thomas, no devotional monument equal to that of St. John of the Cross, no building so beautiful as the Cathedral of Modena or the basilica of St. Zeno in Verona.[5] But there are those for whom the City churches are as precious as any of the four hundred odd churches in Rome which are in no danger of demolition,[6] and for whom St. Paul's, in comparison with St. Peter's, is not lacking in decency;[7†] and the English devotional verse of the seventeenth century – admitting the one difficult case of conversion, that of Crashaw – finer than that of any other country or religious communion at the time.[8†]

The intellectual achievement and the prose style of Hooker and Andrewes came to complete the structure of the English Church as the philosophy of the thirteenth century crowns the Catholic Church. To make this statement is not to compare the *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* with the *Summa*.[9] The seventeenth century was not an age in which the Churches occupied themselves with metaphysics, and none of the writings of the fathers of the English Church belongs to the category of speculative philosophy. But the achievement of Hooker and Andrewes was to make the English Church more worthy of intellectual assent. No religion can survive the judgment of history unless the best minds of its time have collaborated in its construction; if the Church of Elizabeth is worthy of the age of Shakespeare and Jonson, that is because of the work of Hooker and Andrewes.

The writings of both Hooker and Andrewes illustrate that determination to stick to essentials, that awareness of the needs of the time, the desire

for clarity and precision on matters of importance, and the indifference to matters indifferent, which was the general policy of Elizabeth. These characteristics are illustrated in the definition of the Church in the second book of the *Ecclesiastical Polity*. ("The Church of Christ which was from the beginning is and continueth until the end.")[10] And in both Hooker and Andrewes – the latter the friend and intimate of Isaac Casaubon[11] – we find also that breadth of culture, an ease with humanism and Renaissance learning, which helped to put them on terms of equality with their continental antagonists and to elevate their Church above the position of a local heretical sect. They were fathers of a national Church and they were Europeans. Compare a sermon of Andrewes with a sermon by another earlier master, Latimer. It is not merely that Andrewes knew Greek, or that Latimer was addressing a far less cultivated public, or that the sermons of Andrewes are peppered with allusion and quotation. It is rather that Latimer, the preacher of Henry VIII and Edward VI, is merely a Protestant; but the voice of Andrewes is the voice of a man who has a formed visible Church behind him, who speaks with the old authority and the new culture. It is the difference of negative and positive: Andrewes is the first great preacher of the English Catholic Church.

The sermons of Andrewes are not easy reading. They are only for the reader who can elevate himself to the subject. The most conspicuous qualities of the style are three: ordonnance, or arrangement and structure, precision in the use of words, and relevant intensity. The last remains to be defined. All of them are best elucidated by comparison with a prose which is much more widely known, but to which I believe[12†] that we must assign a lower place – that of Donne. Donne's sermons, or fragments from Donne's sermons, are certainly known to hundreds who have hardly heard of Andrewes; and they are known precisely for the reasons because of which they are inferior to those of Andrewes. In the introduction to an admirable selection of passages from Donne's sermons, which was published a few years ago by the Oxford Press, Mr. Logan Pearsall Smith, after "trying to explain Donne's sermons and account for them in a satisfactory manner," observes:

> And yet in these, as in his poems, there remains something baffling and enigmatic which still eludes our last analysis. Reading these old hortatory and dogmatic pages, the thought suggests itself that Donne is often

> saying something else, something poignant and personal, and yet, in the end, incommunicable to us.[13]

We may cavil at the word "incommunicable," and pause to ask whether the incommunicable is not often the vague and unformed; but the statement is essentially right. About Donne there hangs the shadow of the impure motive; and impure motives lend their aid to a facile success. He is a little of the religious spellbinder, the Reverend Billy Sunday of his time, the flesh-creeper, the sorcerer of emotional orgy.[14] We emphasize this aspect to the point of the grotesque. Donne had a trained mind; but without belittling the intensity or the profundity of his experience, we can suggest that this experience was not perfectly controlled, and that he lacked spiritual discipline.

But Bishop Andrewes is one of the community of the born spiritual, one

> che in questo mondo,
> contemplando, gustò di quella pace.[15]

Intellect and sensibility were in harmony; and hence arise the particular qualities of his style. Those who would prove this harmony would do well to examine, before proceeding to the sermons, the volume of *Preces Privatae*. This book, composed by him for his private devotions, was printed only after his death; a few manuscript copies may have been given away during his lifetime – one bears the name of William Laud. It appears to have been written in Latin and translated by him into Greek; some of it is in Hebrew; it has been several times translated into English. The most recent edition is the translation of the late F. E. Brightman, with an interesting introduction (Methuen, 1903).[16†] They are almost wholly an arrangement of Biblical texts, and of texts from elsewhere in Andrewes's immense theological reading. Dr. Brightman[17†] has a paragraph of admirable criticism of these prayers which deserves to be quoted in full:

> But the structure is not merely an external scheme or framework: the internal structure is as close as the external. Andrewes develops an idea he has in his mind: every line tells and adds something. He does not expatiate, but moves forward: if he repeats, it is because the repetition has a real force of expression; if he accumulates, each new word or phrase represents a new development, a substantive addition to what he is saying. He assimilates his material and advances by means of it. His quotation is not decoration or irrelevance, but the matter in which he expresses what he wants to say. His single thoughts are no doubt often suggested

> by the words he borrows, but the thoughts are made his own, and the constructive force, the fire that fuses them, is his own. And this internal, progressive, often poetic structure is marked outwardly. The editions have not always reproduced this feature of the *Preces*, nor perhaps is it possible in any ordinary page to represent the structure adequately; but in the manuscript the intention is clear enough. The prayers are arranged, not merely in paragraphs, but in lines advanced and recessed, so as in a measure to mark the inner structure and the steps and stages of the movement. Both in form and in matter Andrewes's prayers may often be described rather as hymns. [*l*]

The first part of this excellent piece of criticism may be applied equally well to the prose of Andrewes's sermons. The prayers themselves, which, as Canon Brightman seems to hint, should take for Anglicans a place beside the Exercises of St. Ignatius and the works of St. François de Sales,[18†] illustrate the devotion to private prayer (Andrewes is said to have passed nearly five hours a day in prayer) and to public ritual which Andrewes bequeathed to William Laud; and his passion for order in religion is reflected in his passion for order in prose.

Readers who hesitate before the five large volumes of Andrewes's sermons in *The Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology* may find their introduction more easy through the *Seventeen Sermons on the Nativity*, which were published separately in a small volume by Griffith Farran Okeden and Welsh, in *The Ancient and Modern Library of Theological Literature*, and which can still be picked up here and there.[19] It is an additional advantage that these sermons are all on the same subject, the Incarnation; they are the Christmas Day sermons preached before King James between 1605 and 1624. And in the sermons preached before King James, himself a theologian, Andrewes was not hampered as he sometimes was in addressing more popular audiences. His erudition had full play, and his erudition is essential to his originality.

Bishop Andrewes, as was hinted above, tried to confine himself in his sermons to the elucidation of what he considered essential in dogma; he said himself that in sixteen years he had never alluded to the question of predestination, to which the Puritans, following their continental brethren, attached so much importance. The Incarnation was to him an essential dogma, and we are able to compare seventeen developments of the same idea. Reading Andrewes on such a theme is like listening to a great Hellenist

expounding a text of the *Posterior Analytics*: altering the punctuation, inserting or removing a comma or a semi-colon to make an obscure passage suddenly luminous, dwelling on a single word, comparing its use in its nearer and in its most remote contexts, purifying a disturbed or cryptic lecture-note into lucid profundity.[20] To persons whose minds are habituated to feed on the vague jargon of our time, when we have a vocabulary for everything and exact ideas about nothing – when a word half-understood, torn from its place in some alien or half-formed science, as of psychology, conceals from both writer and reader the meaninglessness of a statement,[21†] when all dogma is in doubt except the dogmas of sciences of which we have read in the newspapers, when the language of theology itself, under the influence of an undisciplined mysticism of popular philosophy, tends to become a language of tergiversation – Andrewes may seem pedantic and verbal. It is only when we have saturated ourselves in his prose, followed the movement of his thought, that we find his examination of words terminating in the ecstasy of assent. Andrewes takes a word and derives the world from it:[22†] squeezing and squeezing the word until it yields a full juice of meaning which we should never have supposed any word to possess. In this process the qualities which we have mentioned, of ordonnance and precision, are exercised.

Take, almost at random, a passage from Andrewes's exposition of the text, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke ii.11).[23†] Any passage that we can choose must be torn violently from its context.

> Who is it? Three things are said of this Child by the Angel. (1) He is "a Saviour." (2) "Which is Christ." (3) "Christ the Lord." Three of his titles, well and orderly inferred one of another by good consequence. We cannot miss one of them; they be necessary all. Our method on earth is to begin with great; in Heaven they begin with good first.
>
> First then, "a Saviour"; that is His name, Jesus, *Soter*; and in that Name His benefit, *Salus*, "saving health or salvation." Such a name as the great Orator himself said of it, *Soter, hoc quantum est? Ita magnum est ut latino uno verbo exprimi non possit*. "This name Saviour is so great as no one word can express the force of it."
>
> But we are not so much to regard the *ecce* how great it is, as *gaudium* what joy is in it; that is the point we are to speak to. And for that, men may talk what they will, but sure there is no joy in the world to the joy of

> a man saved; no joy so great, no news so welcome, as to one ready to perish, in case of a lost man, to hear of one that will save him. In danger of perishing by sickness, to hear of one will make him well again; by sentence of the law, of one with a pardon to save his life; by enemies, of one that will rescue and set him in safety. Tell any of these, assure them but of a Saviour, it is the best news he ever heard in his life. There is joy in the name of a Saviour. And even this way, this Child is a Saviour too. *Potest hoc facere, sed hoc non est opus Ejus*, "This He can do, but this is not His work"; a farther matter there is, a greater salvation He came for. And it may be we need not any of these; we are not presently sick, in no fear of the law, in no danger of enemies. And it may be, if we were, we fancy to ourselves to be relieved some other way. But that which He came for, that saving we need all; and none but He can help us to it. We have therefore all cause to be glad for the Birth of this Saviour.

And then, after this succession of short sentences – no one is more master of the short sentence than Andrewes – in which the effort is to find the exact meaning and make that meaning live, he slightly but sufficiently alters the rhythm in proceeding more at large:

> I know not how, but when we hear of saving or mention of a Saviour, presently our mind is carried to the saving of our skin, of our temporal state, of our bodily life, and farther saving we think not of. But there is another life not to be forgotten, and greater the dangers, and the destruction there more to be feared than of this here, and it would be well sometimes we were remembered of it. Besides our skin and flesh a soul we have, and it is our better part by far, that also hath need of a Saviour; that hath her destruction out of which, that hath her destroyer from which she would be saved, and those would be thought on. Indeed our chief thought and care would be for that; how to escape the wrath, how to be saved from the destruction to come, whither our sins will certainly bring us. Sin it is will destroy us all.[24]

In this extraordinary prose, which appears to repeat, to stand still, but is nevertheless proceeding in the most deliberate and orderly manner, there are often flashing phrases which never desert the memory. In an age of adventure and experiment in language, Andrewes is one of the most resourceful of authors in his devices for seizing the attention and impressing the memory. Phrases such as "Christ is no wild-cat. What talk ye of

twelve days?"[25] or "the word within a word, unable to speak a word,"[26] do not desert us; nor do the sentences in which, before extracting all the spiritual meaning of a text, Andrewes forces a concrete presence upon us.

Of the wise men come from the East:

> It was no summer progress. A cold coming they had of it at this time of the year, just the worst time of the year to take a journey, and specially a long journey in. The ways deep, the weather sharp, the days short, the sun farthest off, *in solstitio brumali*, "the very dead of winter."[27]

Of "the Word made flesh," again:

> I add yet farther; what flesh? The flesh of an infant. What, *Verbum infans*, the Word an infant? The Word, and not be able to speak a word? How evil agreeth this! This He put up. How born, how entertained? In a stately palace, cradle of ivory, robes of estate? No; but a stable for His palace, a manger for His cradle, poor clouts for His array.[28]

He will not hesitate to hammer, to inflect, even to play upon a word for the sake of driving home its meaning:

> Let us then make this so accepted a time in itself twice acceptable by our accepting, which He will acceptably take at our hands.[29]

We can now better estimate what is this that we have called relevant intensity, for we have had enough of passages from Andrewes to recognize the extremity of his difference from Donne.

Everyone knows a passage from a sermon of Donne's, which is given by Mr. Pearsall Smith under the title of "I am Not all Here."

> I am here speaking to you, and yet I consider by the way, in the same instant, what it is likely you will say to one another, when I have done, you are not all here neither; you are here now, hearing me, and yet you are thinking that you have heard a better Sermon somewhere else, of this text before; you are here, and yet you think you could have heard some other doctrine of down-right *Predestination*, and *Reprobation* roundly delivered somewhere else with more edification to you; you are here, and you remember your selves that now yee think of it: This had been the fittest time, now, when everybody else is at Church, to have made such and such a private visit; and because you would bee there, you are there.[30]

after which Mr. Pearsall Smith very happily places the paragraph on "Imperfect Prayers":

> A memory of yesterday's pleasures, a feare of tomorrow's dangers, a straw under my knee, a noise in mine eare, a light in mine eye, an any thing, a nothing, a fancy, a Chimera in my braine, troubles me in my prayer. So certainely is there nothing, nothing in spirituall things, perfect in this world.[31]

These are thoughts which would never have come to Andrewes. When Andrewes begins his sermon, from beginning to end you are sure that he is wholly in his subject, unaware of anything else, that his emotion grows as he penetrates more deeply into his subject, that he is finally "alone with the Alone," with the mystery which he is seeking to grasp more and more firmly.[32] One is reminded of the words of Arnold about the preaching of Newman.[33] Andrewes's emotion is purely contemplative; it is not personal, it is wholly evoked by the object of contemplation, to which it is adequate; his emotion is wholly contained in and explained by its object. But with Donne there is always the something else, the "baffling" of which Mr. Pearsall Smith speaks in his introduction. Donne is a "personality" in a sense in which Andrewes is not: his sermons, one feels, are a "means of self-expression." He is constantly finding an object which shall be adequate to his feelings; Andrewes is wholly absorbed in the object and therefore responds with the adequate emotion. Andrewes has the *goût pour la vie spirituelle*,[34] which is not native to Donne. On the other hand, it would be a great mistake to remember only that Donne was called to the priesthood by King James against his will, and that he accepted a benefice because he had no other way of making a living. Donne had a genuine taste both for theology and for religious emotion; but he belonged to that class of persons, of which there are always one or two examples in the modern world, who seek refuge in religion from the tumults of a strong emotional temperament which can find no complete satisfaction elsewhere. He is not wholly without kinship to Huysmans.[35]

But Donne is not the less valuable, though he is the more dangerous for this reason. Of the two men, it may be said that Andrewes is the more mediaeval, because he is the more pure, and because his bond was with the Church, with tradition. His intellect was satisfied by theology and his sensibility by prayer and liturgy. Donne is the more modern – if we are careful to take this word exactly, without any implication of value, or any suggestion

that we must have more sympathy with Donne than with Andrewes. Donne is much less the mystic; he is primarily interested in man. He is much less traditional. In his thought Donne has, on the one hand, much more in common with the Jesuits, and, on the other hand, much more in common with the Calvinists, than has Andrewes. Donne many times betrays the consequences of early Jesuit influence and of his later studies in Jesuit literature; in his cunning knowledge of the weaknesses of the human heart, his understanding of human sin, his skill in coaxing and persuading the attention of the variable human mind to Divine objects, and in a kind of smiling tolerance among his menaces of damnation. He is dangerous only for those who find in his sermons an indulgence of their sensibility, or for those who, fascinated by "personality" in the romantic sense of the word – for those who find in "personality" an ultimate value – forget that in the spiritual hierarchy there are places higher than that of Donne. Donne will certainly have always more readers than Andrewes, for the reason that his sermons can be read in detached passages and for the reason that they can be read by those who have no interest in the subject. He has many means of appeal, and appeals to many temperaments and minds, and, among others, to those capable of a certain wantonness of the spirit. Andrewes will never have many readers in any one generation, and his will never be the immortality of anthologies. Yet his prose is not inferior to that of any sermons in the language, unless it be some of Newman's. And even the larger public which does not read him may do well to remember his greatness in history – a place second to none in the history of the formation of the English Church.

NOTES

1. As printed in *SE*; first published as an unsigned essay in *TLS*, 1286 (23 Sept 1926), 621-22; reprinted in *FLA*. TSE wrote to Bruce Richmond on 6 July: "I have by no means forgotten Andrewes; as a matter of fact this article will be a pretty serious matter for me as I shall have to clear up my mind and try to come to conclusions, in connection with Bishop Andrewes, affecting my whole position" (*L3* 209). In his obituary for Richmond in the *TLS* of 13 Jan 1961, TSE later recalled that "a chance remark in conversation revealed that I was an ardent admirer of Bishop Lancelot Andrewes, and I was at once commissioned to write the leader" (17).

2. In 1608, King James entered into controversy over the oath of allegiance with Cardinal Bellarmine, who declared under the pseudonym "Matteo Torti" that the oath was traitorous to the faith; James directed Andrewes to write a reply. His first treatise, *Tortura torti* (1609), was followed by a second, *Responsio ad apologiam cardinalis Bellarmini* (1610), on the English Church's teaching regarding the sacrament of Eucharist.

3. Reflecting on the death of Archbishop Richard Bancroft, Clarendon asserts that "if he had been succeeded by bishop Andrewes . . . or any man who loved the Church, that infection [the Calvinian party] would easily have been kept out which could not afterwards be so easily expelled." Clarendon argues that Bancroft's successor, George Abbott (1562-1633), who served as Archbishop from 1611 to his death, "was in truth totally ignorant of the true constitution of the Church of England, and the state and interest of the clergy; as sufficiently appeared throughout the whole course of his life afterward." *History of the Rebellion*, vol 1 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1888), 118.

4. Sir Thomas Gresham (ca. 1519-79) served the Queen as financier and founded the Royal Exchange; Sir Francis Walsingham (ca. 1532-90) was Elizabeth's Private Secretary in charge of domestic and state security; he was succeeded in this position by Robert Cecil, 1st Earl of Salisbury (1563-1612) for Elizabeth and King James; Matthew Parker (1504-75), one of the architects of Anglican doctrine in the *Thirty-Nine Articles*, was Archbishop from 1559 to his death; John Whitgift (ca. 1530-1604), Archbishop from 1583 to his death, staunchly opposed Puritans and Noncomformists in upholding Elizabeth's policy of religious uniformity.

5. TSE first visited the tenth-century Basilica of San Zeno and the twelfth-century Cathedral of Modena on his tour of northern Italy in 1911, recording in "Notes on Italy" his impressions of the architectural details of the former, and stating of the latter: "The Cathedral is the most perfect specimen of a Lombard church that I saw" (Houghton).

6. For TSE's remarks on the renewed prospect of the demolition of historic Anglican churches in London, see his "Commentary" of Oct 1926 (831).

7†. In *TLS*: "decorum"

8†. In *TLS* and *FLA*: "or religion at the time."

9. Richard Hooker's *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* in eight books (1593-1662) was written in defense of the Church against Puritan attacks and was intended to expound an Anglican philosophy of civil and spiritual government.

10. Hooker's definition actually appears in Book III, chap. 1.10, as printed in TSE's copy of *The Works*, vol I (1841), 346; *read*: "unto the end."

11. As Bishop of Ely, Andrewes was instrumental in arranging for the French classical scholar Isaac Casaubon to move to London from Paris in 1610. Casaubon committed to Anglicanism and spent time with Andrewes in Ely.

12†. In *TLS*: "but to which we believe"

13. Smith, *Donne's Sermons: Selected Passages*, xxxv. TSE reviewed the book in "The Preacher as Artist" (165); he recommended it, but not Smith's preface, in his first Clark lecture (623).

14. The American Christian evangelist William Ashley "Billy" Sunday became nationally famous for his mesmeric oratory, histrionic preaching style, and lucrative religious campaigns.

15. *Paradiso* XXXI.110-11. *Trans*: "who in this world by contemplation tasted of that peace" (*DC3* 381); Dante the pilgrim refers to the final guide of his journey, St. Bernard of Clairvaux.

16†. In *TLS* and *FLA*: "the translation of F. E. Brightman, with an interesting introduction, in 1903 (Methuen)."

The Preces Privatae of Lancelot Andrewes, trans. F. E. Brightman (1856-1932), fellow of Magdalen College. A copy is in TSE's library. Brightman died on 31 Mar, before the present essay was revised for *SE*.

17†. In *TLS* and *FLA*: "Canon Brightman"; Brightman, MA, FBA, received an honorary doctorate from the University of Durham in 1914.

18†. In *TLS*: "might take the same place for Anglicans which the Exercises of St. Ignatius and St. François de Sales take for Roman Catholics."

St. François de Sales (1567-1622) was a primary interpreter of Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises*, the doctrine of which informs the twelve books of de Sales's *Treatise on the Love of God* (1616).

19. The five-volume edition in this library series, *Ninety-Six Sermons* (Oxford: John Parker, 1841-43), contains in the first volume Andrewes's nativity sermons, which were published in a separate edition as *Seventeen Sermons on the Nativity* (London: Griffith, Farran, Okeden & Welsh, 1887). TSE's quotations from the sermons are from the latter edition, which is in his library.

20. TSE refers to his sessions with Harold Joachim reading Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics* at Oxford, which he acknowledged in the preface to his dissertation: "To Harold Joachim I owe a great deal: the discipline of a close study of the Greek text of the *Posterior Analytics*" (1.239). TSE reiterated the debt in his *Times* obituary (4 Aug 1938) for Joachim: "To his *explication de texte* of the *Posterior Analytics* I owe an appreciation of the importance of punctuation; to his criticism of my papers I owe an appreciation of the fact that good writing is impossible without clear and distinct ideas" (12).

21†. In *TLS* and *FLA*: "utter meaninglessness of a statement"

22†. In *TLS*: "Andrewes takes a word, a concrete statement, and derives the world from it"

23†. In *TLS* and *FLA*: "That there is born unto you this day a Saviour, Which is Christ the Lord, in the City of David." This quotation, translated from the Latin Vulgate in the heading of Andrewes's text, was here changed by TSE to that of the King James Bible, for which Andrewes was a director of translation.

24. Sermon V (1610), 72-73.

25. Sermon XV (1622), 254. TSE had quoted this phrase in "The New Elizabethans and the Old" (13) and afterward used a version of it in "Gerontion" (*CPP* 21).

26. TSE likely recalls a passage from Sermon XII (1617), 200-01: "*Verbum infans*, the Word without a word; the eternal Word not able to speak a word"; he used the phrase as it appears in the present essay in "Gerontion": "The word within a word, unable to speak a word, / Swaddled with darkness" (*CPP* 21).

27. Sermon XV (1622), 253. TSE quotes from this passage, which is marked in his copy of *Seventeen Sermons*, at the beginning of "Journey of the Magi" (1927). He referred to the effectiveness of "the odd syntax, the forceful phrase" of Andrewes's style in this sermon in "The Preacher as Artist" (166-67).

28. Sermon VI (1611), 91.

29. Sermon V (1610), 83.

30. TSE quoted this passage (*Donne's Sermons*, 3-4) with approval in "The Preacher as Artist," concluding: "Things like this break, now and again, through the close convention of Elizabethan-Jacobean speech" (168).

31. *Donne's Sermons*, 4.

32. TSE likely recalls this phrase from Plotinus, *Enneads*, VI.9.xi: "There is the life of gods and of godlike and blessed men – liberation from the alien that besets us here, a life taking no pleasure in the things of earth – a flight of the alone to the Alone." *The Essence of Plotinus*, ed.

Grace H. Turnbull, trans. Stephen MacKenna (New York: Oxford UP, 1948), 222. He may also derive it from Baron von Hügel, who describes the "intercourse of the alone with the Alone – the one soul with the one God" in "Responsibility in Religious Belief," *Essays & Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion* (London: J. M. Dent, 1921), 13.

33. Arnold attended Newman's sermons at St. Mary's and describes his eloquent preaching personality in "Emerson," first delivered in Boston on 1 Dec 1883: "Who could resist the charm of that spiritual apparition, gliding in the dim afternoon light through the aisles of St. Mary's, rising into the pulpit, and then, in the most entrancing of voices, breaking the silence with words and thought which were religious music – subtle, sweet and mournful?" *Discourses in America* (London: Macmillan, 1885), 139-40.

34. *Trans*: taste for the spiritual life.

35. After years of notorious promiscuity and moral dissolution, Joris-Karl Huysmans converted to Roman Catholicism in 1892.

A Commentary

The New Criterion: A Quarterly Review, 4 (Oct 1926) 627-29

MR. KIPLING'S "BENEFIT"

On the seventh of July Mr. Rudyard Kipling (see the *Morning Post* of July 8th) "received at the hands of the Earl of Balfour the Gold Medal of the Royal Society of Literature. The occasion was the Centenary Banquet of the Society, held at the New Princes' Restaurant, Piccadilly. Lord Balfour presided, and the company included distinguished representatives of the world of Art and Letters."[1]

Mr. Kipling's words on that occasion seem to reflect a certain melancholy, though we draw no inferences. Whether Mr. Kipling found it an occasion for elation or dejection we do not know; but the reader of the newspaper account finds it an occasion for a word in support of Mr. Kipling against any odium that may attach to the receipt of a Gold Medal at the hands of the Earl of Balfour. His speech was a good one, and has peculiar pertinence to Mr. Kipling's own reputation. His words about Swift are worth remembering:

> A man of overwhelming intellect and power goes scourged through life between the dread of insanity and the wrath of his own soul warring with a brutal age. He exhausts mind, heart and brain in that battle; he consumes himself; and perishes in utter desolation. Out of all his agony, remains one little book, his dreadful testimony against his fellow-kind, which to-day serves as a pleasant tale for the young under the title of *Gulliver's Travels*.

It seems possible that Mr. Kipling may have been speculating on the chance of being remembered chiefly by *The Jungle Book* (as a tale for children) or the *Just-So Stories*.[2] The world, he remarks, will extract from fiction "just so much of truth or pleasure as it requires for the moment." It is true that the meaning of a work of art is always relative to the world in which the reader lives, and to the reader's needs, desires and prejudices, to his knowledge and his ignorance. It is only more obviously true of a writer like Mr. Kipling, who is eminently, and by his own confession too, a teller of tales. Mr.

Kipling's prose is liable to be qualified by the superior reader as merely brilliant *reportage*. Reportage it is, and sometimes, as in *Captains Courageous*, indifferent reportage: Gloucester fishermen have been able to detect inaccuracies in that book.[3] But the greatest master of the short story in English is more than a reporter. We do not refer to Mr. Kipling's influence upon political or social life: his popularisation of the Empire, his introduction of India and the Colonies into the sphere of consciousness of the inhabitant of the London suburb, a work industriously followed by dozens of story-writers. To discuss these matters we have hardly yet sufficient perspective. But the work of Kipling as a whole has a *sense*, a meaning, which few of its readers will trouble to apprehend; but without apprehending which no one is competent to judge its greatness or abate its value.

THE CITY CHURCHES AGAIN[4]

Meanwhile an evening journal has published a photograph of the Bishop of London, complete with golf-bag and tennis racket, leaving for New Zealand, for, we are told, his first holiday in twenty-five years.[5] We do not grudge the Bishop his holiday; the episcopal function is a very arduous one; it should be interrupted by more frequent vacations. But it is unfortunate that the Bishop's absence should occur at the same time as renewed rumours of the design to destroy the City Churches. Since the first attempt was made, several years ago, the church of St. Magnus Martyr has been concealed, on the side from which its beauty was most conspicuous, by a large industrial structure (not ill-favoured in itself) which reduces the church to the proportions and importance of a museum piece.[6] This is bad enough, but in default of any central direction of municipal planning, it is what we must expect; and it is easier to demolish undesirable buildings than to erect desirable ones. But if those responsible for the preservation of these shrines wish themselves to destroy them, is it not at least to be required, by the people to which these guardians are morally responsible, that a public statement of the ecclesiastical exigencies, in the name of which this demolition is indicated, should be spread abroad? It is only what employers and trades-unions are constantly being called upon to do, whenever there is a strike.[7]

The *Union of Benefices and Disposal of Churches (Metropolis) Measure*, 1926, as passed by the National Assembly of the Church of England, and in the form in which it is in the hands of the members of Parliament for this session, may be obtained for sixpence from H. M. Stationery Office.[8] This

measure would – or will – give authority to a "Metropolitan Benefices Board" to be constituted, for the destruction contemplated. The proceeds of the demolitions (i.e., chiefly the utilisation of the sites, we presume, for commercial buildings) are to be applied "for the promotion of religion in accordance with the principles of the Church of England."[9]

We renounce any attempt to appeal to our Shepherds on the argument for Art, or the beauty of London. We would remind them rather – meeting them on what should be their own ground – that if the church invisible is in decay, it is hardly likely, in the long run, to be restored by the destruction of visible churches. A visible church, whether it assembles five hundred worshippers or only one passing penitent who has saved a few minutes from his lunch hour, is still a church: in this it differs from a theatre, which if it cannot attract large enough audiences to pay, is no better than a barn. The destruction of a church which has the added consecration of antiquity and even a little beauty, is a movement towards the destruction of *the* Church, with Disestablishment on the way. Possibly some reflections of this nature might give our Shepherds pause: we shall cease to appeal in the name of Christopher Wren and his school, and appeal in the name of Laud and the *beauty of holiness*.[10]

NOTES

1. "'Truth's Elder Sister' / Mr. Rudyard Kipling on the Art of Fiction / Address to the Royal Society of Literature," *The Morning Post*, 8 July 1926, 11. TSE's quotation is actually a summary paraphrase of the paper's introduction to the occasion. On receiving the Gold Medal "for services rendered to literature," Kipling gave an address titled "Fiction – Truth's Elder Sister," printed in the report; subsequent quotations are from this text.

2. For TSE's early remarks on *The Jungle Book* and other of Kipling's works, see his 1909 undergraduate essay, "The Defects of Kipling" (1.8).

3. TSE, who spent boyhood summers at the family home near the fishing port of Gloucester, MA, later wrote in the Preface to James B. Connolly's collection of stories, *Fishermen of the Banks* (London: Faber & Gwyer, 1928): "Anyone who has ever read Mr. Kipling's *Captains Courageous* should be thrilled by these true stories of the adventures of Gloucester fishermen or 'bankers,' written by one who (with all respect) knows the subject much better than Mr. Kipling," recalling that the stories "can – or could a few years ago – be learnt by word of mouth from the men between trips, as they lounged at the corner of Main Street and Duncan Street" (vii-viii).

4. TSE had written about the Bishop of London's previous proposal to demolish nineteen historic city churches in his "London Letter: May, 1921"; their loss would be, he concluded there, "irreparable and unforgotten" (345).

5. Arthur Foley Winnington-Ingram (1858-1946), Bishop of London since 1901, embarked on a missionary world tour on 29 July 1926, beginning in Canada and the United States and ending in New Zealand and Sri Lanka. The photograph of the Bishop, holding a sprig of white

heather for luck, appeared in the *Evening Standard* of 29 July (4). "I am going on a modern Crusade," he told the reporter, "pointing smilingly to his golf clubs, modern emblem of the episcopal crook, which lay on the platform with his luggage. He is taking a tennis racket as well as golf clubs on his world tour."

6. The Anglican church of St. Magnus-the-Martyr, rebuilt by Sir Christopher Wren in the seventeenth century, is situated on the banks of the River Thames near London Bridge. Its grand interior appears both in part III of *TWL* – "the walls / Of Magnus Martyr hold / Inexplicable splendour of Ionian white and gold" – and in TSE's notes to the poem: "The interior of St. Magnus Martyr is to my mind one of the finest among Wren's interiors" (*CPP* 45, 53). In 1925, construction was completed on Adelaide House, on King William Street at London Bridge, then the tallest office building in London, built within feet of the west front of the church. Even before construction was complete, the *Times* reported (19 Mar 1924) that "the new 'architectural Matterhorn' . . . conceals all but the tip of the church spire" (18). See illustration 34.

7. Bonamy Dobrée later recalled that "in the summer of 1926 the City churches were largely threatened with destruction, as the Church wished to raise funds for better-attended places of worship. Eliot was deeply opposed to this, as indeed I was. . . . So one Saturday afternoon my wife and I accompanied Eliot at the head of a protest procession through the City, at intervals chanting 'Onward, Christian Soldiers' and other hymns. The churches were saved" (*L3* 243, n. 1).

8. *The Union of Benefices and Disposal of Churches (Metropolis) Measure, 1926.* A measure passed by the National Assembly of the Church of England, laid before both Houses of Parliament pursuant to the provisions of the Church of England Assembly (Powers) Act, 1919, ss. 3 (4) and 4 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1926).

9. *The Union of Benefices and Disposal of Churches*, 1, 9. The Resolution for Approval of the Measure, approved in the House of Lords, was defeated by a wide margin in the House of Commons on 25 Nov.

10. In his "London Letter: May, 1921," TSE had invoked the celebrated English architect in defense of the threatened churches: "Some are by Christopher Wren himself, others by his school; the least precious redeems some vulgar street" (345). The *Opposition* statement likewise asserted that many of the churches "are the product of the genius of Sir Christopher Wren, whose name alone should be their protection."

TSE mentioned William Laud and his defense of the High Anglican liturgy in the face of Puritan opposition in his sixth Clark lecture (706). The "beauty of holiness" derives from Laud's speech, "The Answer . . . to the Speech of the Lord Say and Seal, Touching the Liturgy," wherein he states that in Psalm 110 "the people are said 'to offer their freewill offerings . . . in the beauties of holiness.'" *Works*, VI (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1857), 107.

Mr. Read and M. Fernandez[1]

A review of *Reason and Romanticism: Essays in Literary Criticism*, by Herbert Read

London: Faber & Gwyer, 1926. Pp. vii + 229.

Messages, by Ramon Fernandez

Première série. Paris: Gallimard, 1926. Pp. 222.

The New Criterion: A Quarterly Review, 4 (Oct 1926) 751-57

The intelligent and sensitive critic who discussed Mr. Read's book in the *Times Literary Supplement* (leading article, July 8th, 1926), begins his article by remarking that "The comparative quiescence of the creative spirit in our literature of recent years has found a certain compensation in the increased activity of the critical."[2] This antithesis between the "creative" and the "critical" spirits in literature, between "creative" and "critical" periods, had some validity or utility in the last century, when "literature" was still composed in accepted forms, of poetry, of prose, of the novel; when the writers of verse, prose or the novel could assume for themselves a position respectable or disreputable (it is now much the same thing) in a respectable or disreputable world (according to the way in which you looked at it); when accordingly the "critic" existed, had a position in "literature." But at the present time, when we have begun to suspect that "literature" depends for its existence, even its subsistence, upon other things the existence of which we now doubt; when one of our most conspicuous *littérateurs* can exclaim: *La littérature est impossible. Il faut en sortir*;[3] when it appears that the existence and the concept of literature depends upon our answer to other problems, the distinction between the "critic" and the "creator" is not a very useful one. The significance of the term critic has varied indefinitely: in our time the most vigorous critical minds are philosophical minds, are, in short, creative of values.

Mr. Read and M. Fernandez provide an excellent example of this invalidation of the ancient classification. They are of the same generation, of the same order of culture; their education is as nearly the same as that of men

of different race and nationality can be; and they are occupied with similar material. Both books are collections of reprinted essays: and both volumes have a unity of purpose hitherto uncommon in volumes of collected essays. Both have rewritten and improved their essays, under the impulse of this unity of purpose. Both were primarily students of literature, and animated by the desire to find a meaning and justification for literature. Mr. Read has the advantage of being European and English; M. Fernandez that of being European and American (he was born in Mexico). Both, instead of taking for granted the place and function of literature – and therefore taking for granted a whole universe – are occupied with the inquiry into this function, and therefore with the inquiry into the whole moral world, fundamentally, with entities and values. And they represent, finally, in my opinion, two divergent directions which the human spirit can take.

Both are occupied with what M. Fernandez calls the *problème de hiérarchie*.[4] Let us start from the novel, in which both writers are interested, and from the particular point – a capital point for every contemporary mind – on which we find them most closely in agreement: their judgment of the work of Marcel Proust. I will take a sentence which Mr. Read, in his book, quotes from the book of M. Fernandez, and quotes obviously with warm approval:

> Les objections que soulève l'œuvre de Proust, considérée comme analyse intégrale du cœur, comme révélatrice du fond de notre nature, peuvent être à mon avis réduites à deux essentielles: elle n'édifie point une hiérarchie des valeurs, et elle ne manifeste, de son début à sa conclusion, aucun progrès spirituel.[5]

This sentence in itself is enough to show the penetration, the seriousness, and the novelty of M. Fernandez' criticism. And as, from this point of agreement – the rejection of Proust (and by Mr. Read, of Joyce also, with whom Fernandez is not concerned) because of what M. Fernandez notifies as *l'absence de l'élément moral chez Proust*[6] – as from this point the divergence begins, and becomes more and more manifest, we have, from these two writers, almost incorrigible testimony to the actual lack of value of Proust, or more exactly, to his value simply as a milestone, as a point of demarcation between a generation for whom the dissolution of value had in itself a positive value, and the generation for which the recognition of value is of utmost importance, a generation which is beginning to turn its

attention to an athleticism, a *training*, of the soul as severe and ascetic as the training of the body of a runner.

There are two sharp distinctions to be drawn: first, that between "this generation" and the last, between the generation which accepts moral problems and that which accepted only aesthetic or economic or psychological problems – and this is the distinction which assimilates Mr. Read and M. Fernandez; and second, the distinction between two different ways of dealing with the moral problem, and this is the distinction which separates Mr. Read and M. Fernandez. Both are, like St. Thomas and Nietzsche, theologians and moralists. But the directions in which Mr. Read and M. Fernandez seek their solution are opposite. M. Fernandez – who is, incidentally, a critic as well qualified to pronounce upon English literature as any English critic living – finds an ensample in Meredith; Mr. Read (who, of living English critics, is that one with the best understanding of *American* literature) in Henry James. The contrast is significant.

One of the finest, the most fecund, of the essays in M. Fernandez' volume, beside the essay on Proust, which is probably the most profound that has been written on that author, is his essay on Cardinal Newman, which originally appeared in *The Criterion*.[7] M. Fernandez is, from a certain point of view, in closer sympathy with Newman than are many of Newman's Christian or literary apologists; he is in much closer sympathy with Newman in his place and *time*: with Newman, in fact – and it is a large part – in so far as Newman was *not* Christian or Catholic. He does not understand, perhaps, that in which Newman believed or tried to believe, but he understands, better than almost anyone, the *way in which* Newman believed or tried to believe it. And this is a capital difference: a different way of facing the "moral" problem: M. Fernandez as a psychologist, Mr. Read as a metaphysician. Mr. Read is interested in St. Thomas Aquinas, because he is interested in metaphysical and logical truth; M. Fernandez is interested in Newman, because he is interested in *personality*. The difference between Read and Fernandez is a difference of focus, a difference of value: M. Fernandez is in a sense with Bergson, with the pragmatists, with those who have reached a certain degree of sophistication about "the nature of truth": for Mr. Read, I imagine, there is, or there should be, no "nature" of truth, there is only truth and error. Only, the contrast is more interesting, between M. Fernandez and Mr. Read, than between M. Fernandez and those whom one assumes to be his natural antagonists in his own country, such as M. Massis and M. Maritain: for Mr. Read is a seeker after truth, whose

researches we, as Anglo-Saxons, can follow understandingly; whereas M. Massis and M. Maritain are for us, as Anglo-Saxons, less cognate, because they have, for themselves and in a way which is not exactly ours, found truth.

In another type of critical review one would be able to discuss in detail the commentary – acute, profound and useful – of both authors on the authors whom they criticise: of M. Fernandez on Conrad, Stendhal and Meredith; of Mr. Read on Metaphysical Poetry, Comedy, the Brontës and Smollett. The temptation is very great, because both are, in the best sense, critics with international learning and international standards. One is tempted to commend, to French and Italian readers respectively, Mr. Read's observations on Diderot and on Guido Cavalcanti; to English readers, M. Fernandez' observations on Meredith, Newman and Conrad. But such comparisons and eulogies are likely to be made; what is not likely to be made is the contrast of two points of view, of which these two critics are important as types. Both, as I have said, are occupied with the constitution of a *moral* hierarchy in the modern world. M. Fernandez has a very high, very serious, and very difficult ideal of perfection, of the development and perfection of character: this ideal is nowhere better conceived than in his essay on *Le message de Meredith*. We may not accept M. Fernandez' estimate of Meredith; in fact, for a contemporary Anglo-Saxon reader, it is difficult to place Meredith so high as does M. Fernandez.[8] I imagine that an intelligent Anglo-Saxon of the present day is inclined, like myself, to subscribe rather to a recent judgment of Meredith delivered by Mr. Leonard Woolf in *The Nation*;[9] we are apt to perceive in Meredith's "philosophy" just that which is temporary and tinsel. Nevertheless, we may admit that a foreign observer of the intelligence and the knowledge of England and English literature which cannot be denied to M. Fernandez, may even owing to a freshness of enthusiasm and naïveté, perceive qualities in Meredith which we neglect. The important, for my purpose, is that M. Fernandez finds in Meredith the assertion, even the demonstration, of a moral hierarchy from what I choose to call a *Cartesian* point of view. M. Fernandez likes Meredith, and likes Newman, primarily for the same reason: that they build a moral hierarchy, but that they build it on the fact of *one's own existence* as the primary reality. And the question, the ultimate question – which I do not pretend to answer – is whether M. Fernandez, by positing *personality* as the ultimate, the fundamental reality in the universe, is really supporting or

undermining that "moral hierarchy" of which he, as well as Mr. Read, is so stout a champion.

The issue is really between those who, like M. Fernandez, and (if I understand right) Mr. Middleton Murry (otherwise very different from M. Fernandez) make *man the measure of all things*, and those who would find an extra-human measure. There are those who find this measure in a revealed religion, and those who, like Mr. Irving Babbitt and Mr. Read, look for it without pretending to have found it. In order to make man the measure of all things, M. Fernandez (I speak with reservation, pending the appearance of his expected Essay on Personality) has to assume a theory of reality which seems to be that of traditional psychology.[10] The Mind seems to have for M. Fernandez a primary reality, psychology seems to take precedence over ontology. The Aristotelian commentator, Zabarella, observes:

> Dicamus quod intellectus seipsum intelligit, quatenus supra suam operationem reflectitur, dum alia intelligit, cogniscit enim se intelligere, proinde cogniscit se habere naturam talem, quae est apta fieri omnia. . . .[11]

and on the other hand we find in Watson's *Behaviourism* the following definition of personality:

> The sum of activities that can be discovered by actual observation of behaviour over a long enough term to give reliable information. In other words, personality is but the end product of our habit systems.[12]

The last definition is a little unsatisfactory, because one wonders what is a "long enough" term to give "reliable" information. There is, however, a certain agreement between Aristotle and Professor Watson (though Professor Watson may not think so): they are both, I think, in disaccord (by implication) with M. Fernandez. "Personality" for both Aristotle and Professor Watson, refers to something outside.

This something outside is something for which Mr. Read is seeking, though not with complete success. Mr. Read is extremely honest, but not (it is extremely difficult) absolutely thoroughgoing. The critic of the *Times*, above mentioned, quotes the following passage from Mr. Read's book:

> The criticism of revealed religion has been operative not only on the empirical plane (which matters little) but also on the psychological plane. A religion like Christianity is built up largely on unconscious symbols: it finds its most powerful forces in subconscious processes like

> prayer, grace, and faith. The effect of experimental science has been to destroy the unconsciousness of these symbols; it understands them and therefore equates them with conscious equivalents, which are no longer symbols and which on that account no longer compel the imagination.[13]

The critic of the *Times* has very cleverly fastened on one of Mr. Read's weakest points, and he observes, in passing, that the word "subconscious" comes "very strangely from the pen of a Thomist." Mr. Read has here got himself into a muddle; but it is a muddle which testifies to his honesty (for we all get into a muddle somewhere, and the question is only *where*). Mr. Read stating that the empirical plane matters little (and I think he is wrong, because we cannot pass over so cavalierly the difference between "planes") and implying that the psychological plane matters much, is throwing away a trick to M. Fernandez. Why should Mr. Read take the psychological plane so seriously; and what does he mean by unconscious symbols? If we are unconscious that a symbol is a symbol, then is it a symbol at all? and the moment we become conscious that it is a symbol, is it any longer a symbol? Mr. Read is on the verge of getting involved in the problem of Transsubstantiation. M. Fernandez is in danger of being an idealist without ideals; Mr. Read of being a realist without real objects. Both are struggling to find an objective truth; both are encumbered by the wipings of psychology. It is M. Fernandez who has arrived the nearer to a coherent theory: the great weakness of Mr. Read's book (if I have read these essays correctly) is that it represents a period of transition from psychology to metaphysics.

I believe myself in sympathy with both Mr. Read and M. Fernandez, and out of sympathy with the critic of the former in the *Times*, in the conception of Intelligence. The critic of the *Times* reproves in Mr. Read an "uncritical frame of mind" for which "verse that contains a maximum of explicit conceptual thought becomes superior to poetry that is mindful of its proper function and excellence – namely, to pursue its rhythmic progress through an identity of image and idea." This statement, about Mr. Read, is only intelligible to me on the assumption that his critic is incapable of appreciating the verses of Guido Cavalcanti which Mr. Read quotes (50) and incapable of understanding the *Vita Nuova*.[14] To a critic with such incapacities, Mr. Read must naturally seem to have a "bias towards intellectualism." "Intellectualism" is a pejorative flung at Aristotle – and at St. Thomas – by those who have not taken the trouble to acquaint themselves

with the sense of the texts. Similarly, the same critic, objecting simultaneously to Mr. Read and to St. Thomas, comments:

> To a modern mind the word "intelligence" does not connote the faculty or act of "simple apprehension of truth." To a modern mind that act or faculty is "intuition." Whether we know as much as we ought to know about intuition may be doubted, but we shall not increase our knowledge by calling it intelligence.[15]

To this it may be replied, that we only complicate our ignorance by calling it "intuition," and that for anyone who has devoted even a little attention to St. Thomas, or to Aristotle, the term "intelligence" is adequate. *Intelligibilia se habent ad intellectum sicut sensibilia ad sensum*:[16] they may be, and sometimes are, grasped immediately by inspection; and to insist on another faculty "intuition" is merely to demand a more potent and thuriferous ju-ju.[17] And I think that M. Fernandez, as well as Mr. Read, will be on the side of what we call "the intelligence."[18]

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. This review was untitled in the *New Criterion*; Gallup records the present title from the wrapper (213). When Gorham B. Munson sought permission, in a letter of 4 July 1928, to include the review in his anthology, *Style and Form in American Prose* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran, 1929), proposing the title "The Critic as a Creator of Values," TSE replied on 16 July that he preferred "The Critic and the Perception of Values," as it so appeared (50-58). This review was completed by 3 Aug 1926, when TSE wrote to Thomas McGreevy that "the Herbert Read book isn't available because I have done a notice of it myself" (*L3* 239).

2. "Reason and Criticism," *TLS* (8 July 1926), 453-54. The anonymous reviewer was John Middleton Murry.

3. *Trans*: "Literature is impossible. One must get out of it." Jean Cocteau, *Lettre à Jacques Maritain* (Paris: Stock, 1926), 53; trans. John Coleman, *Art and Faith: Letters between Jacques Maritain and Jean Cocteau* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1948), 54. TSE told Bonamy Dobrée on 23 June 1926 that if he would write on Cocteau's *Le Rappel à l'ordre* [Call to Order] "it would partly fill our theatrical gap . . . and would avoid the necessity of mentioning Cocteau's recent and notorious *Lettre à Jacques Maritain*" (*L3* 194). Dobrée reviewed these works and seven others by Cocteau in the present issue of the *Criterion*, stating that "one would like to say that the *Lettre* was inevitable. For he has always been haunted by a desire for beauty, not the formal made beauty of acknowledged masterpieces – which for him too much resemble tombstones – but for the beauty which grows under one's eyes, that one makes for one's self as one goes. . . . Thus 'literature,' with all that it implies, is impossible" (765).

4. *Trans:* problem of hierarchy. *Messages: Literary Essays*, trans. Montgomery Belgion (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1927), 221-22.

5. Fernandez, 147-48; Read, 220. *Trans*: "The objections that are aroused by the work of Proust, considered as an integral analysis of the heart, as revealing the depths of our nature, may, in my opinion, be reduced to two essentials: it does not erect a hierarchy of values, and it does not manifest, from its opening to its conclusion, any spiritual progress." Trans. Belgion, 194.

6. Fernandez, 162. *Trans*: "the absence of the moral element in Proust"; trans. Belgion, 214.

7. Fernandez, "The Experience of Newman," *Criterion*, 3 (Oct 1924), 84-102; trans. Richard Aldington. TSE published Frederic Manning's critical response, "A French Criticism of Newman," in *Criterion*, 4 (Jan 1926), 19-31, in which Manning accused Fernandez of detaching Newman's thought from its context and wrongly aligning it with mysticism and Henri Bergson. Fernandez's rejoinder, "The Experience of Newman: Reply to Frederic Manning," appeared in the present issue on pp. 645-58.

8. Fernandez concludes: "Meredith est le premier qui ait montré que, dans l'ordre de la vie, un jugement romantique ou décadent est toujours un jugement faux, parce qu'il n'est pas formé dans les conditions nécessaires de toute pensée vraie. Il a décapité le romantisme. . . . Il est temps de recueillir son message. Il est temps de le connaître et de lui obéir" (146). *Trans*: "Meredith is the first to have shown that in the order of life a romantic or decadent judgment is always a false judgment, because it is not formed in the conditions necessary to all true thought. He beheaded romanticism. . . . It is time to receive his message. It is time to become aware of and obedient to it." Trans. Belgion, 190.

9. Woolf writes: "at the core of Meredith's philosophy and art there is something peculiarly, metallically false," and that the "false, jarring note which appears in his 'philosophy of life' reappears in his art, and because of it his brilliant powers, instead of being a merit, become themselves a defect." "George Meredith," a review of J. B. Priestley's *George Meredith* (1926), *N&A* (19 June 1926), 323.

10. *De la personnalité* (Paris: Au Sans Pareil, 1928).

11. *Trans*: Let us propose that the intellect understands itself; insofar as it reflects about its own operation, when it understands other things, it knows indeed that it understands; furthermore it understands that it has a certain nature, such that it is capable of becoming all things. From Book III of Jacopo Zabarella's posthumously published commentary on Aristotle's *De Anima*, *Commentarii . . . in tres Aristotelis libros de anima* (Frankfurt: L. Zetzner, 1606), 783a. TSE read Zabarella, whom he called "the greatest of all Aristotelian commentators," while studying Aristotle at Oxford in 1914 (1.460, n. 46).

12. John B. Watson, *Behaviourism* (London: Keegan Paul, 1925), 220. TSE's copy is signed and dated 1926. In Apr 1918, TSE wrote to Bertrand Russell about Watson's earlier book, *Behavior: An Introduction to Comparative Psychology* (1914): "I am not convinced that Watson and those people are really very important" (*L1* 261). When he invited I. A. Richards to review Watson's *Behaviourism* on 19 Jan 1926, however, he stated that "there are very few people competent to tackle this book which seems to me an important one" (*L3* 37).

13. Murry, 453, quoting from Read, 16.

14. Read quotes from Cavalcanti's "Donna mi prega" ["A Lady Entreats Me"].

15. Murry, 454.

16. *Trans*: "the intelligible is to the intellect, as the sensible is to the sense." Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, Ia, q.84, a.4.

17. thuriferous: incense-bearing; ju-ju: any object superstitiously venerated by West African tribes for its supernatural or magical powers. TSE called George Bernard Shaw's idea of the "Life Force" a "potent ju-ju" in "Mr. Robertson and Mr. Shaw" (781).

18. TSE's copy of *Messages* is inscribed "à T. S. Eliot, / dont l'intelligence maîtrise la sensibilité, avec l'admiration et la sympathie de / Ramon Fernandez" [to T. S. Eliot, whose intelligence controls the sensibility, with the admiration and sympathy of Ramon Fernandez]. The concluding essay in the volume is Fernandez's "Le Classicisme de T. S. Eliot."

Note sur Mallarmé et Poe[1]

La Nouvelle Revue française, 27 (1 Nov 1926) [524]-26; trans. Ramon Fernandez.

Il est téméraire à moi d'écrire sur Mallarmé. Sa poésie compte beaucoup d'admirateurs et même de fanatiques, hors de France, et particulièrement en Angleterre, qui sont mieux qualifiés pour prendre la parole. Il me faut donc chercher une excuse. Voici, je crois, la plus plausible : beaucoup d'admirateurs de Mallarmé, surtout à l'étranger, se sont appliqués à déchiffrer ses énigmes et à apprécier sa syntaxe et sa métrique. Mais il y a un autre aspect du « problème » que je puis peut-être traiter avec plus de compétence, et qui n'est pas négligeable : ce qu'on pourrait appeler l'aspect de littérature comparée – je ne veux pas dire une vaine étude des origines et des influences, mais la définition du type du poète, établie par une comparaison avec d'autres manifestations de ce type dans d'autres langues et à d'autres époques. Je ne propose pas une solution – qui exigerait tout un volume – mais une suggestion, la simple esquisse d'un schème qu'il serait peut-être possible de développer.

Dans une suite d'études encore incomplète j'essaie de définir la nature de ce qu'on appelle la *poésie métaphysique*. L'expression n'est pas des plus heureuses, car on s'en est servi d'abord pour désigner le style poétique employé en Angleterre dans la première moitié du dix-septième siècle ; et son extension comprend Marino et Góngora, c'est-à-dire le style baroque. Il nous faut pourtant travailler avec les mots que nous trouvons, en tâchant de leur donner un sens plus précis. La poésie métaphysique n'est pas identique à la poésie *philosophique* : chez Dante nous trouvons l'une et l'autre, Lucrèce est avant tout et à peu près exclusivement philosophique. Et le terme psychologique ne convient pas non plus. On pourrait suggérer la différence en disant que George Eliot est un romancier philosophique, Dostoïevsky un romancier psychologique, Henry James un romancier « métaphysique » : encore que cette division ne soit aucunement exacte ni suffisante.

Le poète philosophique est celui qui vit d'un système, soit complet et conscient comme ceux de Dante et de Lucrèce, soit fragmentaire ou simple objet de recherche comme celui de Baudelaire. Le poète « métaphysique » peut avoir, et quand il excelle il a le tour d'esprit philosophique : par exemple Cavalcanti, Donne, Poe et Mallarmé. Mais la théorie particulière qu'il

fait sienne, s'il la fait sienne, n'est pas nécessairement une avec ce qu'il a à donner. Donne, Poe et Mallarmé ont la passion de la spéculation métaphysique, mais il est évident qu'ils ne *croient* pas aux théories auxquelles ils s'intéressent ou qu'ils inventent à la façon dont Dante et Lucrèce affirmaient les leurs. Ils se servaient de leurs théories pour atteindre un but plus limité et plus exclusif : pour raffiner et pour développer leur puissance de sensibilité et d'émotion. Leur œuvre était une expansion de leur sensibilité *au-delà des limites du monde normal*, une découverte de nouveaux objets propres à susciter de nouvelles émotions.

En cela ils se distinguent aussi de *l'halluciné* : ils ne sautent pas brusquement dans un monde de rêve ; c'est le monde réel qui est par eux agrandi et continué. Parmi les grands écrivains l'halluciné est peut-être plus rare qu'il ne semble. Les distinctions absolues sont dangereuses en cette matière ; cependant on peut dire en toute confiance qu'il y a fort peu de *l'halluciné* chez Poe et chez Mallarmé. Pour être admis dans le monde de Rimbaud ou de Blake nous devons nous soumettre patiemment à une réorganisation complète,[2*] tandis qu'avec Mallarmé, avec Donne, avec Baudelaire, et je crois avec Poe, nous sommes dans un monde où tout le matériel, toutes les données, nous sont parfaitement familières ; seulement par chacun de ces poètes notre sensibilité est prolongée ; d'où vient que le développement, étant continu, demeure parfaitement réel. Rien n'est plus réel que le monde de Mallarmé : presque un monde de *natures mortes*, mais un monde qui comprend le développement de la passion humaine la plus grave.

Parvenu à ce point, et surtout si l'on compare Mallarmé à Poe, on peut faire ressortir de très grandes différences. Poe fait du réel avec le plus artificiel des mélodrames (par exemple *L'Assignation*). Ce qui chez Byron est complètement artificiel et faux devient chez Poe une expérience réelle. Le matériel de Mallarmé est tout à fait différent, mais ce qu'il fait est pareillement une transmutation de l'accidentel en réel.

Il n'est peut-être pas insoutenable de croire que la « poésie métaphysique » précède ou suit la poésie philosophique et apparaît en l'absence d'une philosophie constituée. Chez Poe et Mallarmé la philosophie est en partie remplacée par un élément *d'incantation*. Dans *Ulalume* par exemple, et dans *Un Coup de Dés*, cette incantation, qui insiste sur la puissance primitive du Mot (*Fatum*), est manifeste. En ce sens le vers de Mallarmé, qui s'applique si bien à lui-même, constitue une brillante critique de Poe : *donner un sens plus pur aux mots de la tribu*. L'effort pour restituer la puissance du Mot, qui inspire la syntaxe de l'un et de l'autre et leur fait écarter le

sonore pur ou le pur mélodieux (qu'ils pourraient tous les deux, s'ils le voulaient, si bien exploiter), cet effort, qui empêche le lecteur *d'avaler d'un coup* leur phrase ou leur vers, est une des qualités qui rapprochent le mieux les deux poètes. Il y a aussi la fermeté de leur pas lorsqu'ils passent du monde tangible au monde des fantômes.

Translation:

Note on Mallarmé and Poe

It is rash of me to write on Mallarmé. His poetry has many admirers and even fanatics outside of France, and particularly in England, who are more qualified to address the subject. I must therefore find an excuse. Here is, I believe, the most plausible: many admirers of Mallarmé, especially those abroad, have applied themselves to deciphering his enigmas and assessing his syntax and metric. But there is another aspect of the "problem" which I can perhaps treat with more competence, and which is not negligible: that which one may call the aspect of comparative literature – by which I do not mean a vain study of origins and influences, but the definition of a type of poet established by a comparison with other manifestations of this type in other languages and epochs. I do not propose a solution – which would require an entire volume – but a suggestion, a simple outline of a framework which it would be possible perhaps to develop.

In a series of studies still incomplete, I am attempting to define the nature of that which one calls *metaphysical poetry*. The expression is not the most felicitous, because it designates first and foremost the poetic style employed in England in the first half of the seventeenth century; and by extension, it includes Marino and Góngora, that is to say the baroque style. We must, however, work with the words that we have at our disposal, while trying to give them a more precise meaning. Metaphysical poetry is not identical to *philosophical* poetry: in Dante we find both; Lucretius is above all and almost exclusively philosophical. And the term "psychological" is no more congenial. One could illustrate this difference by suggesting that George Eliot is a philosophical novelist, Dostoevsky a psychological novelist, Henry James a "metaphysical" novelist: even though these divisions are in no way either accurate or sufficient.

The philosophical poet is one who lives according to a system, be it complete and conscious like that of Dante or Lucretius, be it fragmentary or a simple matter of research such as that of Baudelaire. The

"metaphysical" poet can have, and when he excels he has, a philosophical turn of mind: for example Cavalcanti, Donne, Poe and Mallarmé. But the particular theory that he makes his own, if he makes it his own, is not necessarily the same as the one which he has to offer. Donne, Poe and Mallarmé have the passion of metaphysical speculation, but it is evident that they do not *believe* in the theories in which they are interested or which they create, in the same way that Dante and Lucretius asserted theirs. They made use of their theories to attain a more limited and more exclusive end: to refine and develop their power of sensibility and emotion. Their work was an expansion of their sensibility *beyond the limits of the normal world*, a discovery of new objects likely to generate new emotions.

In this they also distinguish themselves from *the visionary*: they do not leap suddenly into a dream world; it is the real world which is expanded and prolonged by them. Among the great writers *the visionary* is perhaps rarer than it may seem. Absolute distinctions are dangerous in this matter; however, one can say with complete confidence that there is very little of *the visionary* in Poe and Mallarmé. In order to be admitted into the world of Rimbaud or Blake, we must submit ourselves patiently to a complete reorganization,[3*] whereas with Mallarmé, with Donne, with Baudelaire, and I believe with Poe, we are in a world in which our material surroundings, all that we take for granted, are perfectly familiar to us; our sensibility is merely extended by each of these poets; from which it follows that the development, being a mere extension, remains perfectly real. Nothing is more real than the world of Mallarmé: almost a world of *still lifes*, but a world that includes the development of the gravest human passion.

At this point, and particularly if one compares Mallarmé with Poe, one can point up some very great differences. Poe makes something real from the most artificial of melodramas (for example "The Assignation"). That which in Byron is completely artificial and false becomes in Poe a real experience. Mallarmé's material is quite different, but what he makes is likewise a transmutation of the accidental into the real.

It is perhaps not unreasonable to believe that "metaphysical poetry" precedes or follows from philosophical poetry and emerges in the absence of a well-defined philosophy. In Poe and Mallarmé the philosophy is in part replaced by an element of *incantation*. In "Ulalume," for example, and in *Un coup de dés*, this incantation, which insists on the primitive power of the Word ("Fatum"), is evident.[4] In this sense the verse of Mallarmé, which applies so well to himself, constitutes a brilliant critique of Poe: *donner un*

sens plus pur aux mots de la tribu.[5] The effort to restore the power of the Word, which inspires the syntax of both and makes them reject the pure sound or the pure melody (which they could both, if they wished, exploit masterfully), this effort which prevents the reader from *swallowing whole* their phrase or verse, is one of the qualities which best reconciles the two poets. There is also the firmness of their step when they move from the tangible world into the world of phantoms.[6]

NOTES

1. A contribution to a special tribute issue of the *NRF* titled "Hommage à Stéphane Mallarmé," which included essays by Paul Claudel, Francis Ponge, and Albert Thibaudet, among others.

2*. TSE's note: "Ceci ne peut évidemment s'appliquer à l'œuvre *entière* de l'un ou de l'autre ; c'est une façon de marquer des points extrêmes."

3*. TSE's note: "This obviously cannot be applied to the *entire* work of one or the other; it is a way to mark the extreme points."

4. Mallarmé, *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard* [*A Throw of the Dice Will Never Abolish Chance*] (1897).

5. *Trans*: to give a purer sense to the words of the tribe. Line 6 of Mallarmé's "Le Tombeau d' Edgar Poe" (1876), a line that TSE adapted in Part II of *Little Gidding*: "our concern was speech, and speech impelled us / To purify the dialect of the tribe" (*CPP* 141). TSE quoted the line again and expanded upon it in his second Turnbull Lecture: "and this purification of language is not so much a progress, as it is a perpetual return to the real" (*VMP* 289).

6. TSE wrote to Marguerite Caetani on 18 Nov 1926: "I am so pleased that you like my 'Mallarmé' which is merely a few hurried and incoherent notes, but I shall probably develop the idea in my book on Donne next year" (*L3* 314). The planned book on Donne, based on TSE's Clark Lectures, never materialized.

Hooker, Hobbes, and Others[1]

An unsigned review of *The Social and Political Ideas of Some Great Thinkers of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. A Series of Lectures Delivered at King's College, University of London, during the Session 1925-26. Ed. F. J. C. Hearnshaw

London: Harrap, 1926. Pp. 219.[2]

Times Literary Supplement, 1932 (11 Nov 1926) 789

Any series of lectures, however carefully revised for publication, is liable to produce an effect of informality and diffuseness; and a series of lectures by different authorities is liable to produce an effect of incoherence as well. This book is not free from either of these faults. It consists of eight lectures, by eight scholars of note, on eight important figures of the age: Bodin, Hooker, Suarez, James I, Grotius, Hobbes, Harrington and Spinoza.[3] The lectures, one believes, must have been decidedly interesting, and must have fulfilled the purpose of such lectures, which is to stimulate interest in a very important period of historical inquiry; printed, they appear less connected, though they are very skilfully bound together by the editor's introductory lecture, which covers the whole period with great ability. The lecturers who had the fortune to deal with the less known "thinkers" are naturally those who appear to the greatest advantage; for it is difficult to say very much that is new about Hooker or Hobbes or Spinoza in a lecture necessarily introductory in its nature. Dr. Norman Sykes's lecture on Hooker is however an admirable piece of appreciation, and as with almost all of the other lectures, one wishes that the author might develop it into a separate treatise;[4] and one of his statements about Hooker especially is worth pondering:

> Upon a general reading of the *Ecclesiastical Polity* perhaps the most striking characteristic which impresses itself upon the student is the author's gift of historical thinking. Few have had a finer sense of the value of historical tradition than Hooker. To him the unity and continuity of history was neither a phrase nor a fallacy, but a practical truth as well as an inspiration. [85]

Mr. Woodward's "Hobbes" is also good, though we think that in preparing it for publication he might have dwelt at greater length upon the effects of seventeenth-century science upon Hobbes, and his communications with men of science in their formation of his attitudes and prejudices.[5] The Master of Balliol, considering the political and social ideas of Spinoza, has the most difficult subject, and comes off least well; some parts of the lecture appear hastily written, and such a statement as "(Spinoza) has been recognised more and more as the most religious of philosophers" is too absolute to have much meaning [206].[6] And while Spinoza was certainly, as Dr. Lindsay says, "a great and good man," it is perhaps permissible to suggest that the word "saint" might be reserved for more precise applications [205].

But the volume was worth printing for several reasons. It has become more and more manifest of late that the seventeenth century is a period of capital importance and that there are a number of companion works to Sainte Beuve's *Port-Royal* to be written. We need only instance the revival of interest, especially in France, in Descartes, and from a new point of view; and any reader of Professor Whitehead's *Science and the Modern World* will see how things are moving.[7] The names of Bodin, Suarez and Grotius are of great importance, but to most amateur students of the period they are no more than names; one of the merits of this series of lectures is to elicit their importance, not only for the jurist, but for the general student of the epoch. Harrington, too, was a happy inclusion. One regrets many omissions, but the editor disarms us by calling attention himself to some of these omissions.

As was said above, however, the introductory lecture on the period is itself of considerable value, and dexterously knits together the rest as well as possible. The state of Europe during the wars of religion, the situation in the different countries, and the peculiar position of England are well exposed in very few words. It is interesting to note those "developments and changes" which, from Dr. Hearnshaw's point of view are the most signal. They are six:

> the increase of the power and pretensions of kings; secondly, the decay of the feudal aristocracy, the rise of the capitalist middle class, and the increase of a pauper proletariat; thirdly, a revolution in the art of war; fourthly, an extension of geographical discovery, accompanied by the founding of colonies on the part of the exploring peoples, and resulting

> in the expansion of Europe into the New Worlds; fifthly, the spread of the Renaissance, with its essential secularism and its fundamental individualism, into fresh countries and into hitherto prohibited spheres of thought; and, finally, the development of natural science. [27]

Obviously Dr. Hearnshaw is primarily concerned with stating what happened, without proceeding too far into the doubtful realm of theory of why these things happened. Perhaps the final problem for historical students is a problem of imagination – that is, to reconstruct for ourselves so fully the mind of the Renaissance and the mind of the pre-Renaissance, that neither of them shall be dead for us – that is to say, unconscious parts of our own mind – but shall be conscious and therefore utilizable for our future development. The contributors to this volume have done something in this direction.

NOTES

1. Completed by 1 Nov 1926, when TSE told Richmond that he had sent him "separately a review of the Hearnshaw book" (*L3* 296).

2. F. J. C. Hearnshaw (1869-1946), Professor of Medieval History at King's College and editor of *The Social and Political Ideas of Some Great Medieval Thinkers* (1923) and *The Social and Political Ideas of Some Great Thinkers of the Renaissance and the Reformation* (1925), volumes that printed previous lectures in this series at King's.

3. Jean Bodin (1529-96), French political theorist and philosopher; Hugo Grotius (1583-1645), Dutch jurist and philosopher; Francisco Suárez (1548-1617), Spanish Jesuit and scholastic philosopher; James Harrington (1611-77), English political philosopher.

4. Norman Sykes (1897-1961), later Dean of Winchester, was then lecturer in history at King's College, London, and author of *Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London* (1926).

5. E. L. Woodward (1890-1971), historian and fellow of both All Souls and New College, Oxford.

6. Sandie Lindsay (Alexander Dunlop Lindsay, 1st Baron Lindsay of Birker, 1879-1952), formerly professor of moral philosophy at the University of Glasgow, and Master of Balliol College, Oxford since 1924.

7. TSE had recently read and expressed his admiration for Herbert Read's "The Dethronement of Descartes" in the *TLS* (9 Sept 1926), a review of three titles: Alfred Espinas's *Descartes et la morale: Études sur l'histoire de la philosophie de l'action* [Descartes and Morality: Studies in the History of the Philosophy of Action] (1925); Jacques Maritain's *Trois réformateurs: Luther, Descartes, Rousseau* [*Three Reformers: Luther, Descartes, Rousseau*] (1925), the English translation of which TSE later reviewed in the *TLS* (8 Nov 1928, 818); and *Correspondence of Descartes and Constantyn Huygens, 1635-1647* (1926). He may also refer to Étienne Gilson's edition of Descartes' *Discours de la methode. Texte et commentaire* [Discourse on Method. Text and Commentary] (1925) and Gonzague Truc's critique of Descartes in *Le Retour à la scolastique* [The Return to Scholasticism] (1919).

Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (1925). Whitehead begins by crediting the scientific advances of the 16th and 17th centuries with fundamentally altering the modes of metaphysical thought. TSE's review of the book, titled "The Return of Foxy Grandpa" (1927), was written and set in type for the third issue of Wyndham Lewis's *The Enemy* but did not appear there.

Massinger

An unsigned review of *Étude sur la collaboration de Massinger avec Fletcher et son groupe*, by Maurice Chelli

Paris: Les Presses universitaires de France, 1926. Pp. 310.

Massinger's A New Way to Pay Old Debts

ed. A. H. Cruickshank

Oxford: Clarendon, 1926. Pp. xxxiv + 141.

Times Literary Supplement, 1294 (18 Nov 1926) 814

Philip Massinger has been fortunate beyond his contemporaries in having received such close attention from two scholars of the distinction of Canon Cruickshank and the late Maurice Chelli.[1] The larger books of Canon Cruickshank and M. Chelli were reviewed in these columns at the times of their appearance; the two now under consideration are important supplements.[2] The editing of Massinger does not present such difficulties of corrupt texts as does that of some of his elder contemporaries; but it is useful to have his greatest play well edited by itself. In the introduction Canon Cruickshank discusses the possible original of the character of Sir Giles, and criticizes with his usual justice and acumen the opinions of Hazlitt, Leslie Stephen and M. Chelli.[3]

M. Chelli's posthumous book is edited by Professor Legouis.[4] We regret the absence of any biographical note: Chelli shows himself a scholar of great promise, whose death is to be deplored. His brilliance is indeed, in his textual criticism, at moments a little overpowering; one feels that his confidence in his methods is excessive, that such confidence would be excessive even had he been an Englishman born. We say, his confidence in his methods, for on the whole we think he is justified in his confidence in his results. For the fact always remains that attributions on the ground of internal evidence, of style and versification, depend ultimately upon taste and sensibility as much as upon exact tests: we can perfect our taste and sharpen our sensibility, but it is taste and sensibility that direct us in seeking the tests. We feel that M. Chelli is usually right in his general distinctions, but that his enthusiasm – which is great – sometimes leads him to push attribution farther than is possible. But

M. Chelli is not on dangerous ground. The cases with which he is dealing are not so difficult as, for instance, the partition of labour between Middleton and Rowley. M. Chelli does not try to upset any of our settled opinions of the literary value of Beaumont or of Fletcher or of Massinger. For the plays which come into question are not any of the best plays: the plays on which must always be based our criticism of Beaumont and Fletcher, and of Fletcher, and of Massinger, remain as they were; and it is largely our knowledge of these plays which enables us to parcel out the plays in which collaboration was probable. The reader of M. Chelli's book will not, therefore, expect to find any startling disturbance of literary reputations. But some conclusions of considerable interest issue from M. Chelli's work.

One of these conclusions is that collaboration in the manner of the Elizabethan dramatists is not conducive to the best work. (We are distinguishing, as does M. Chelli, the work of collaboration proper from the remodeling of one man's play by another, which is a different problem of criticism.) The most successful collaboration is of course that between Beaumont and Fletcher; and it is (in our opinion) precisely because this was an association of two writers of great cleverness, rather than of two writers of genius, that it was successful. Some may maintain that the association of Middleton and Rowley was beneficial to both; but it is equally possible to maintain that the genius of these two – for both had genius – did, just because it was genius, make them incompatible. Some of the conditions of the Elizabethan world which made the collaboration possible may have been beneficial to literary activity; incidentally, the younger dramatists are likely to have got a training out of their apprenticeship which they would otherwise has missed; but that fact remains – we believe that M. Chelli was of this opinion – that the great plays of the period are, so far as they are great and so far as they are works of art, each of them the work of one man. And as the chief motive of the collaboration was economic – the necessity of turning out plays very quickly in order to make a living – it is natural that this method of writing should be responsible for the existence of a large body of mediocre and worse than mediocre work.

The very possibility of such cooperation as took place between Fletcher, Massinger, Field, and Daborne depended, as M. Chelli says, upon the lowness of the artistic standards of the time.[5] The audience did not demand unity, but a succession of striking scenes: what more natural than that two or more authors should each supply a few scenes of the type in which he

was adept? It is the sort of collaboration which nowadays can be successfully practiced in a revue.

> Les habitudes françaises d'unité restent trop fortes pour admettre la pièce morcelée, à actions entremêlées ou successives; la division de la besogne, telle que nous l'avons décrite, reste, en France, inadmissible, à peine compréhensible. En Angleterre même, je ne crois pas qu'elle se soit reproduite, dans le cours de l'histoire théâtrale.[6]

And M. Chelli makes a very French reflection which is worth considering –

> Il faut à l'homme un grand effort et pour inventer et pour accueillir une invention; et pourtant il n'aime rien tant que le changement. L'inertie physique fait demeurer un corps à sa place, et l'inertie mentale nous fait répéter nos actes, nos pensées, nos attitudes, nos paroles. D'un bout à l'autre d'un pays de même langue, ce ne sont pas seulement les mêmes mots qui servent, et servent encore, mais des phrases entières . . . De même, les écrivains qui cherchent un succès immédiat et assuré couvrent les mêmes ressorts d'un apprêt qui trompe et séduit . . .[7]

One word of caution is desirable. We must distinguish, as does M. Chelli very clearly, the work of collaboration from the work of *remaniement*,[8] which has a different technique and perhaps a different value; and also we should be careful to take every case of apparent collaboration on its own merits. Or, in making attributions, we must distinguish problems of collaboration from those of imitation. In the collaborations with which M. Chelli is dealing there is no question of one author imitating the style of another; on the contrary, M. Chelli believes with reason that the conditions of haste of writing lead Fletcher, for instance, and Massinger, each to fall into certain tricks of style which render their several contributions the more easily distinguishable. But when we are faced with the question of an attribution to Shakespeare or to Marlowe we must proceed much more cautiously. Shakespeare does not fall into a type, he had his own ways of learning which are unique to such great genius: it is possible that he could in his youth so assimilate any style as to write in it as well as his model. If this is so, it is only one more proof of Shakespeare's superiority.

NOTES

1. Scholar of Elizabethan drama Maurice Chelli (1883-1918) suffered a serious injury in World War I in 1914 and died at the age of thirty-five. Both of his posthumously published

books, *Le Drame de Massinger* [The Plays of Massinger] (1924) and *Étude sur la collaboration de Massinger avec Fletcher et son groupe* [Study on Massinger's Collaboration with Fletcher and His Group], were edited by Émile Legouis.

2. TSE reviewed Cruickshank's *Philip Massinger* (1920) in "Philip Massinger" (244); Richard Aldington reviewed Chelli's *Le Drame de Massinger* in "A French Study of Massinger," *TLS*, 1167 (29 May 1924), 334.

3. Cruickshank discusses Sir Giles Overreach, the comic rogue of Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* whom TSE admires in "Philip Massinger," and critiques passages from William Hazlitt's *Lectures on the Dramatic Literature of the Age of Elizabeth*, Leslie Stephen's *Hours in a Library*, and Chelli's *Le Drame de Massinger*.

4. Émile Legouis (1861-1937), professor of English at the Sorbonne, author of *Geoffrey Chaucer* (1908) and *William Wordsworth and Annette Vallon* (1922).

5. Actor and playwright Nathan Field (1587-1620) wrote *A Woman Is a Weather-Cocke* (1612) and *Amends for Ladies* (1618) and collaborated with Massinger on *The Fatal Dowry* (1632) and several others. Playwright Robert Daborne (ca. 1580-1628) was author of two extant plays, *A Christian Turn'd Turk; or, The Tragicall Lives and Deaths of the Two Famous Pyrates, Ward and Dansiker* (1612) and *The Poor Man's Comfort* (1655). Daborne was imprisoned for debt in 1613 along with Field and Massinger, with whom he may have collaborated on another, unnamed play.

6. *Trans*: The French customs of unity remain too strong to allow for a broken-up play, with intertwined or successive actions; the division of labor, as we have described it, remains unacceptable in France, barely comprehensible. Even in England, I do not think that it was ever repeated in the course of theatrical history. Chelli, 271.

7. *Trans*: Man requires great effort to invent and to welcome an invention, and yet he likes nothing more than change. Physical inertia makes a body stay in its place; mental inertia makes us repeat our acts, our thoughts, our behaviors, our words. Throughout a country that shares the same language, it is not merely the same words that are used again and again but entire phrases. . . . Similarly, writers who seek immediate and assured success imbue the same activities with an affectation that deceives and seduces. Chelli, 272-73.

8. *remaniement*: revision, adaptation.

More and Tudor Drama

An unsigned review of *Early Tudor Drama: Medwall, the Rastells, Heywood, and the More Circle*, by A.W. Reed

London: Methuen, 1926. Pp. xvi + 246.

Times Literary Supplement, 1296 (2 Dec 1926) 880

The only reproach to be laid against this curiously interesting book is that its title is misleading. It should have been called "The Influence of Sir Thomas More upon Early Tudor Drama." The book is a mine of detailed information, extracted from innumerable documents of the period in which Dr. Reed has specialized, and is evidently the fruit of many years of patient labour.[1] The result is something which should be of great interest to the student of social history. It is valuable also to the student of the literature of the period who is himself engaged in historical or critical work; it is not the book for the general student of English literature which its title seems to imply.

On the other hand, besides the particular questions of authorship of the Interludes,[2] the book supplies new information about one of the two most interesting literary circles of the sixteenth century. The second important circle was, of course, that of the Countess of Pembroke, which was more in the nature of a salon presided over by a great lady;[3] the circle and "household" of Sir Thomas More, presided over by a great man, was a loose association of relatives and friends. The only point of resemblance between the two is the interest in Senecan drama. Of the two, Sir Thomas More's circle has the larger importance and the more curious connexions. More was, of course, intimate with the politicians and the humanists of his time; with Erasmus, and with Sir Thomas Elyot, whose association with More laid him for a time under suspicion of excessive orthodoxy.[4] The influence of More and his circle extends even to John Donne, nephew of More's Jasper Heywood who translated two plays of Seneca and who ended his career with distinction in the Jesuit Order.[5] The circle of More is one of the most important knots for any student of sixteenth and early seventeenth century culture to unravel.

Dr. Reed's contribution to the study of the More household includes an immense amount of marginalia. Part of the book consists in a collection of

all the material available concerning John Rastell, the printer, and his part in the dramatic activity of the time. An important part of the book is occupied with a study of the canon of John Heywood's plays. One chapter is devoted to an amusing picaresque book, *The Merry Jests of the Widow Edyth*, written by a servant of Sir Thomas More, one Walter Smyth. This Smyth was considerably superior in education to a Yellowplush, and seems to have been on friendly terms with the family, for we learn later of his leaving in his will his copies of Chaucer and Boccaccio to Sir Thomas's son.[6] Dr. Reed is able to show, after considerable research, that the merry jests are founded on fact, and that many persons of prominence, including some of the More acquaintance, were involved as dupes of the merry widow. From his study of this book Dr. Reed draws an interesting and unexpected conclusion. He believes that the book not only had the approval, but reflects some of the spirit of Sir Thomas himself:

> It is good to feel the catholicity of mind and the saving sanity of natural humour that fostered the mingling of piety, scholarship, and unabashed free fun within the More household. . . . I believe that not a little of More's hostility to Lutheranism arose out of his conviction of the danger to national sanity of the withering influence of the precisians upon the comic spirit. [155-56]

The main thesis in a book of curious and entertaining variety is contained in the fourth and fifth chapters: it is this, that all of the important plays of the period, numbering eleven, were produced under the influence of More. The first dramatist is the newly revived Medwall, a member of the household of Morton, the author of *Nature* and *Fulgens and Lucres*.[7] The second is Rastell, whom Dr. Reed has good evidence for believing to be the author of *Gentleness and Nobility* and *The Four Elements* and translator and adaptor of *Calisto and Meliboea*.[8] The third and last is Heywood, with the six plays usually assigned to him. (Dr. Reed expends some labour in showing – and we think he is right – that there is no reason for depriving Heywood of the attribution of *The Four PP*, *The Pardonere and Frere*, and *Johan Johan*.)[9] Only the two chapters in which this thesis is developed are concerned directly with the plays; most of the rest of the book assembles all of the existing information, including a great deal discovered by Dr. Reed himself, about the Rastells and Heywoods. Much of it is, though interesting in itself, irrelevant; what is relevant is that part of the documentation which shows the relations of these persons with the More household. The book is

crammed with facts. We suggest that with the knowledge and with the technique of investigation that he has mastered Dr. Reed ought now to produce a volume, equally scholarly but of more interest to the general reader, on Sir Thomas More and his influence and associations. We also ask for a new edition of the plays of Medwall, Rastell, and Heywood together, to be edited by Dr. Reed.[10] No one is more competent to give us these needed works, and his scholarship would become known to a wider public. Dr. Reed is so accurate in his attributions and dates that we are all the more astonished at learning (123) that Junius and Dryden belong to the same generation. Has Dr. Reed brought to light evidence which antedates Junius a hundred years?[11]

NOTES

1. A. W. (Arthur William) Reed (1873-1957), university reader in English Literature and Language at King's College, London.

2. The "interlude" was a short dramatic sketch, typically comedic and farcical, which developed out of the medieval morality play and came into prominence in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, likely performed by traveling companies during banquets. TSE discussed the interlude and the morality play under the heading "The Earliest Forms of Drama" in the first unit of his Extension lectures on Elizabethan literature (1.754).

3. Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke (1561-1621), poet, translator, and literary patron, brought into her circle her brother Sir Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, Michael Drayton, Sir John Davies, Samuel Daniel, and others. TSE later titled his second Norton lecture "Apology for the Countess of Pembroke" (1932).

4. Desiderius Erasmus (ca. 1466-1536), Dutch humanist, classical scholar, Catholic priest, and theologian whose works include *Moriae encomium* [The Praise of Folly] (1511), which he dedicated to More, who entrusted the publication of his *Utopia* (1516) to Erasmus. Following More's execution in 1535 for treason in refusing to accept the king as Supreme Head of the Church of England, Sir Thomas Elyot dissociated himself from More, requesting that Thomas Cromwell "lay apart the remembraunce of the amity between me and Sir Thomas More . . . consydering that I was never so moche addict unto hym as I was unto truthe and fidelity towards my sovereigne lord." *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries* (London: Cambden Society, 1843), 141.

5. See TSE's previous discussion of More's relation with Donne, the Heywoods and the Rastells in his second Clark lecture, "Donne and the Middle Ages" (629-30). Jasper Heywood translated three Senecan tragedies: *Troas* (1559), *Thyestes* (1560), and *Hercules Furens* (1561).

6. Walter Smyth (d. 1538?), an amateur actor, bon vivant, and More's personal servant from 1520 to 1529, performed each of his twelve *Merry Jests*, published by John Rastell in 1525, in the great hall of More's home. Smyth, who includes himself among the Widow Edyth's suitors ("Walter Smyth was this young man's name / One of her lovers, and I might tell for shame"), was elevated by More to the office of Sword-Bearer to the Lord Mayor when More became Lord

Chancellor. Reed quotes from Smyth's will: "To John More, his master's only son, he leaves his 'Chauscer of Talles and Boocas' " (154). Yellowplush: footman, domestic servant.

7. The playwright Henry Medwall (1462-ca.1502), author of *Fulgens and Lucres*, known as the first full-length secular play in English, and the morality play *Nature*, wrote both works in the 1490s while he resided in the household at Lambeth of John Morton (ca. 1420-1500), Archbishop of Canterbury from 1486 until his death. Both plays were printed posthumously, ca. 1512-16 and ca. 1530, respectively.

8. Reed assigns Rastell's composition of these works to the period 1526-29; the interlude of *Calisto and Meliboea* (1530), was translated and adapted from *La Celestina* (or *Tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea*, 1499), a Spanish picaresque romance by Fernando de Rojas.

9. In attributing these three plays to Heywood, known for his six interludes, Reed identifies More as an influential figure in their composition, conjecturally ca. 1519-22. *The Pardonere and Frere* and *Johan Johan* were printed in 1533, *The Four PP*, ca. 1544.

10. Reed collaborated on editions of Medwall's *Fulgens and Lucres* (1926) and *The English Works of Sir Thomas More* (1931).

11. In discussing the critics of Heywood's plays, Reed states that "the judgment of the generation that produced a Junius and a Dryden is not to be despised" (123). Reed refers to the seventeenth-century scholar Francis Junius (1588-1677), with whom TSE confuses the pseudonymous Junius of the eighteenth century. See Reed's reply to the review and TSE's response to him in the *TLS* of 9 Dec (868).

Sir John Davies[1]

Chief Justice Davies died on December 7, 1626. He left a number of poems, a philosophical treatise, "Reason's Academy," some legal writings, and several long State Papers on Ireland.[2] As a public servant he had a distinguished career; but very likely the poem which has preserved his memory, *Nosce Teipsum*, was what commended him[3†] to King James. Possibly James was more appreciative of learning than of poetical merit but, in any case, he recognized merit in a poet who was, in some respects, as out of place in his own age as he is in ours.

Davies's shorter poems are usually graceful and occasionally lovely, but they are so completely eclipsed even by the modest reputation of *Nosce Teipsum* and *Orchestra* that they are never chosen as anthology pieces. *Nosce Teipsum*, by its gnomic utterance and its self-contained quatrains, lends itself to mutilation: but a stanza or two is all that has been anthologized.[4†] Probably all that most readers know of Davies is represented by the two stanzas in the *Oxford Book of English Verse*:

I know my soul hath power to know all things,
Yet she is blind and ignorant in all:
I know I'm one of Nature's little kings,
Yet to the least and vilest things am thrall.

I know my life's a pain and but a span;
I know my sense is mock'd in everything;
And, to conclude, I know myself a Man –
Which is a proud and yet a wretched thing.[5]

Fine and complete as the two stanzas are they do not represent the poem, and no selection of stanzas can represent it. Davies is a poet of fine lines, but he is more than that. He is not one of that second rank of poets who, here and there, echo the notes of the great.[6†] If there is, in *Orchestra*, a hint of the influence of Spenser, it is no more than the debt which many Elizabethans owe to that master of versification. And the plan, the versification, and the content of *Nosce Teipsum* are, in that age, highly original.

The poem of *Nosce Teipsum* is a long discussion in verse of the nature of the soul and its relation to the body. Davies's theories are not those of

the later seventeenth-century philosophers, nor are they very good Aristotelianism. Davies is more concerned to prove that the soul is distinct from the body than to explain how such distinct entities can be united. The soul is a spirit, and, as such, has wit, will, reason and judgment. It does not appear as the "form" of the body, and the word "form" appears in the poem rather in the sense of "representation" (*similitudo*). The soul is in the body as light is in the air – which disposes of the scholastic question whether the soul is more in one part of the body than another.[7] Nor are the problems of sense perception difficult to resolve: Davies is not troubled by the "reception of forms without matter."[8] His contribution to the science of acoustics is the explanation that sounds must pass through the "turns and windings" of the ear –

> For should the voice directly strike the braine,
> It would astonish and confuse it much;[9]

Whether or not Davies borrowed his theories – if they deserve the name of theories – from Nemesius or from some other Early Christian author,[10] and whether he got them direct or secondhand, it is evident that we cannot take them very seriously. But the end of the sixteenth century was not a period of philosophic refinement in England – where, indeed, philosophy had visibly languished for a hundred years and more. Considering the place and the time, this philosophical poem by an eminent jurist is by no means a despicable production. In an age when philosophy, apart from theology, meant usually (and especially in verse) a collection of Senecan commonplaces, Davies's is an independent mind.

The merit and curiosity of the poem, however, reside in the perfection of the instrument to the end. In a language of remarkable clarity and austerity Davies succeeds in maintaining the poem consistently on the level of poetry; he never flies to hyperbole or bombast, and he never descends, as he easily might, to the pedestrian and ludicrous. Certain odd lines and quatrains remain in the memory, as:

> But sith our life so fast away doth slide,
> As doth a hungry eagle through the wind,

(a simile which Alexander borrows for his *Julius Caesar*),[11] or

> And if thou, like a child, didst feare before,
> Being in the darke, where thou didst nothing see;

Now I have brought thee *torch-light*, feare no more;
Now when thou diest, thou canst not hud-winkt be.[12]

Davies has not had the credit for great felicity of phrase, but it may be observed that, when other poets have pilfered from him or have arrived independently at the same figure, it is usually Davies who has the best of it. Grosart compares the following two passages showing a simile used by Davies and by Pope:

Much like a subtill spider, which doth sit
In middle of her web, which spreadeth wide;
If ought doe touch the utmost thred of it,
Shee feeles it instantly on every side.[13]

Pope:

The spider's touch, how exquisitely fine,
Feels at each thread, and lives along the line.[14]

Davies's spider is the more alive, though he needs two more lines for her. Another instance is the well-known figure from the *Ancient Mariner*:

Still as a slave before his lord,
The ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast –[15]

where "most" is a blemish. Davies has (in *Orchestra*):

For loe the *Sea* that fleets about the Land,
And like a girdle clips her solide waist,
Musicke and measure both doth understand;
For his great chrystall eye is always cast
Up to the Moone, and on her fixèd fast;
And as she daunceth in her pallid sphere,
So daunceth he about his Center heere.[16]

But the mastery of workmanship of *Nosce Teipsum* and its beauty are not to be appreciated by means of scattered quotations. Its effect is cumulative. Davies chose a difficult stanza, one in which it is almost impossible to avoid monotony. He embellishes it with none of the flowers of conceit of his own age or the next, and he has none of the antitheses or verbal wit with which

the Augustans sustain their periods. His vocabulary is clear, choice and precise. His thought is, for an Elizabethan poet, amazingly coherent; there is nothing that is irrelevant to his main argument, no excursions or flights. And, although every quatrain is complete in itself, the sequence is never a "string of pearls" (such as was fashionable in the next age, as in Crashaw's "Weeper"); the thought is continuous.[17] Yet no stanza ever is identical in rhythm with another. The style appears plain, even bald, yet Davies's personal cadence is always there. Many critics have remarked the condensation of thought, the economy of language, and the consistency of excellence; but some have fallen into the error of supposing that Davies's merit is of prose. Hallam, after praising the poem, says:

> If it reaches the heart at all, it is through the reason. But since strong argument in terse and correct style fails not to give us pleasure in prose, it seems strange that it should lose its effect when it gains the aid of regular metre to gratify the ear and assist the memory.[18]

Hallam's criticism is topsy-turvy. Hallam's heart must have been peculiarly inaccessible, or his reason very easily touched. The argument is not strong; had Davies entered the ring of philosophical argument his contemporary, Cardinal Bellarmine, could have knocked him out in the first round. Davies had not a philosophical mind; he was primarily a poet, but with a gift for philosophical exposition. His appeal is, indeed, to what Hallam calls the heart, though we no longer employ that single organ as the vehicle of all poetic feeling.[19†] The excellence of the theory of body and soul which Davies expounded is, however, irrelevant. If some one had provided him with a better theory the poem might have been, in one aspect, a better one; in another aspect it does not matter a fig. The wonder is that Davies, in his place and time, could produce so coherent and respectable a theory as he did. No one, not even Gray, has surpassed Davies in the use of the quatrain which he employed for *Nosce Teipsum*; and no poem in any similar metre (compare *The Witch of Atlas*)[20] is metrically superior to *Orchestra*. Even his little acrostic poems on the name of Queen Elizabeth are admirable in grace and melody.[21] And with this genius for versification, with a taste in language remarkably pure for his age, Davies had that strange gift, so rarely bestowed, for turning thought into feeling.

In the effort to "place" Davies, who appears anomalous, critics have compared him on the one hand to the Senecals, to Chapman and Daniel

and Greville,[22] and on the other hand to Donne and the metaphysicals. Neither classification is quite exact. Davies's only direct debt as a poet seems to be to Spenser, the master of everybody. The type of his thought, and consequently the tone of his expression, separates him from the Senecals. His thought, as we have said, is inferior as philosophy, but it is coherent and free from eccentricity or pose. He thinks like a scholastic, though the quality of his thought would have shocked a scholastic. Chapman, Daniel and Greville, so far as they can be said to have thought at all, thought like Latin rhetoricians. Like the other dramatists, they imbibed from Seneca a philosophy which is essentially a theatrical pose. Hence their language, even when pure and restrained – and Daniel's is astonishingly pure and restrained – is always orotund and oratorical; their verse is as if spoken in public, and their feelings as if felt in public. Davies's is the language and the tone of solitary meditation; he speaks like a man reasoning with himself in solitude, and he never raises his voice.

In the same way Davies may be said to have little in common with Donne. It is not merely Davies's restraint in the use of simile and metaphor. The verbal conceit, as used by Donne, implies a very different attitude towards ideas from that of Davies, perhaps a much more conscious one. Donne was ready to entertain almost any idea, to play with it, to follow it out of curiosity, to explore all its possibilities of affecting his sensibility. Davies is much more mediaeval; his capacity for belief is greater. He has but the one idea, which he pursues in all seriousness – a kind of seriousness rare in his age. Thought is not exploited for the sake of feeling, it is pursued for its own sake; and the feeling is a kind of by-product, though a by-product worth far more than the thought. The effect of the sequence of the poem is not to diversify or embellish the feeling: it is wholly to intensify. The variation is in the metrics.

There is only one parallel to *Nosce Teipsum*, and, though it is a daring one, it is not unfair to Davies. It is the several passages of exposition of the nature of the soul which occur in the middle of the *Purgatorio*.[23] To compare Davies with Dante may appear fantastic. But, after all, very few people read these parts of Dante, and fewer still get any pleasure out of them: in short, these passages are probably as little read or enjoyed as *Nosce Teipsum* itself. Of course they are vastly finer, for two quite different reasons: Dante was a vastly greater poet, and the philosophy which he expounds is infinitely more substantial and subtle:

Esce di mano a lui, che la vagheggia
prima che sia, a guisa di fanciulla
che piangendo e ridendo pargoleggia,

l'anima semplicetta, che sa nulla,
salvo che, mossa da lieto fattore,
volentier torna a ciò che la trastulla.

Di picciol bene in pria sente sapore;
quivi s'inganna, e retro ad esso corre,
se guida o fren non torce suo amore.[24]

It is not in any way to put Davies on a level with Dante to say that anyone who can appreciate the beauty of such lines as these should be able to extract considerable pleasure from *Nosce Teipsum*.

NOTES

1. As printed in *OPP* [149]-55; originally published in *TLS*, 1297 (9 Dec 1926), 906. On 17 Aug, Bruce Richmond wrote to TSE about the approaching anniversary of Davies's death: "I should like to have something about him, if only because the last two stanzas of 'Humane Knowledge' have stuck in my head since I was a boy. Would you care to let us have either a leader or perhaps two columns for the middle page . . . ?" (*L3* 296, n. 2). TSE replied on 1 Nov that he would "get on quickly to the Davies" and confirmed on 1 Dec: "I can also promise the 'Davies.'" In the "Preface" to *OPP*, TSE relates that the present essay was "rescued from oblivion, and recommended for inclusion here, by Mr. John Hayward" (*OPP* xi).

TSE draws upon the introduction by Alexander B. Grosart (1827-99) to his edition of *The Complete Poems of Sir John Davies*, vol 1 (London: Chatto and Windus, 1876) and quotes from the poems as printed there; hereafter abbreviated Grosart.

2. Davies, solicitor-general and attorney-general for Ireland from 1603 to 1619, was nominated Lord Chief Justice of England in 1626 but died on the day of installation. John Donne preached the funeral sermon. The full range of Davies's papers was collected in Grosart's three-volume edition *The Works in Verse and Prose of Sir John Davies* (1869-76); he attributed *Reason's Academie* (1605) to Davies, but its author was later established to be Robert Mason. In 1622, Davies published an edition of his three major poems: *Orchestra; or, A Poeme of Dauncing* (1596); *Hymnes of Astraea* (1599); and *Nosce Teipsum* [Know Thyself] (1599). TSE referred to Davies's meditative verse as preparatory to metaphysical poetry in the Clark Lectures (733).

3†. In *TLS*: "was his commendation to King James."

4†. In *TLS*: "all that survives in this form."

5. From *Nosce Teipsum*, concluding stanzas of "Of Humane Knowledge," ll.173-80, modernized and editorially titled "Man," the only selection by Davies included in Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's edition (Oxford: Clarendon, 1900), 218.

6†. In *TLS*: "If Davies is a poet of fine lines, he is more than that. He is not one of those secondrate poets who, here and there, echo the notes of the great."

7. Thomas Aquinas, relying on the Aristotelian notion of the soul as the "form" of the body, concludes that the soul exists in its entirety in each part of the body in *Summa theologiae* Ia, q. 76, a. 8. TSE was working on a review of Maurice De Wulf's *History of Mediaeval Philosophy* while he was composing the present essay; see "Medieval Philosophy" (870).

8. TSE quotes from memory in referring to Aristotle's description of sense perception in *De anima* II.12 (424a 17-18): "we must understand that sense is that which is receptive of sensible forms apart from their matter." *De anima*, trans. R. D. Hicks (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1907), 105. TSE may also have found the discussion in Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* Ia, q. 78, a. 3.

9. From *Nosce Teipsum*, "Hearing," ll. 1009-10; Grosart, 67.

10. Grosart refutes at length the claim that *Nosce Teipsum* was indebted to the *De natura hominis* of the Christian philosopher Nemesius (*fl.* 390), translated by George Wither as *The Nature of Man* (1636): "Not one line was taken from Nemesius" (lxiii).

11. Sir William Alexander, *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar* (1607), II.ii: "Or as an eagle through the ayre / Of which no way th'impression keepes, / Most swift when seeming least to move: / This breath of which we take such care, / Doth toss the body every where, / That it may hence with haste remove." *The Poetical Works of Sir William Alexander*, vol II (Glasgow: Maurice Ogle, 1872), 248.

12. From *Nosce Teipsum*, ll. 1313-14, 1909-12; Grosart, 84, 116.

13. From *Nosce Teipsum*, ll. 1061-64; Grosart, 70.

14. Pope, *An Essay on Man*, First Epistle, ll. 217-18; also in Grosart, lxxxviii.

15. Coleridge, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, Part VI, ll. 414-17; Grosart: "Coleridge must have carried it in his omnivorous memory, for surely one of the most memorable of the stanzas in his 'Ancient Mariner' drew its inspiration thence" (xcvii).

16. From *Orchestra*, stanza 49; Grosart, 179.

17. TSE used this phrase, perhaps adapted from Mario Praz's "rosario di epigrammi" [rosary of epigrams], to refer to the "sequence of self-contained stanzas" characteristic of Crashaw's "Saint Mary Magdalene, or The Weeper" in his review "An Italian Critic on Donne and Crashaw" (597). He made further use of it in the sixth Clark Lecture (710).

18. Historian Henry Hallam (1777-1859), *Introduction to the Literature of Europe of the 15th, 16th, and 17th Centuries*, vol II (London: John Murray, 1860), 227; also in Grosart, lxxv.

19†. In *TLS*: "that simple organ as the receptacle of all poetic feeling."

20. Davies's *Orchestra* is written in rhymed, seven-line stanzas, Shelley's *The Witch of Atlas* (1824) in ottava rima; both are in iambic pentameter.

21. These are the twenty-six poems in *Hymnes of Astraea, in Acrosticke Verse* (630-31), in which the first letters in each of the sixteen lines of each poem vertically spell the royal name, ELISABETHA REGINA.

22. TSE refers briefly to Greville and the Senecals in his second Clark Lecture. In "Seneca in Elizabethan Translation" (1927), he examines the nature of Seneca's influence on Chapman, Daniel, Greville, and others, stating that "hardly a dramatist, between Kyd and Massinger, is not many times indebted to Seneca," and further that Davies "somewhat resembles" Daniel and Greville (*SE* 85, 95).

23. In "Dante" (1920), TSE referred specifically to Cantos XVI and XVIII, which contain passages that he considered "pure exposition of philosophy, the philosophy of Aristotle strained through the schools" (232).

24. *Purgatorio* XVI.85-93. *Trans*: "From his hands who fondly loves her ere she is in being, there issues, after the fashion of a little child that sports, now weeping, now laughing, the simple, tender soul, who knoweth naught save that, sprung from a joyous maker, willingly she turneth to that which delights her. First she tastes the savour of a trifling good; there she is beguiled and runneth after it, if guide or curb turn not her love aside" (*DC2* 197). TSE added this translation from his Temple Classics edition, in which these lines are marked, in a note in *OPP*. He had quoted from this passage as early as 1916 in a review of Paul Elmer More's *Aristocracy and Justice* (1.407); he praised excerpts from it repeatedly in subsequent years and ultimately incorporated a version into the first line of *Animula* (1929): "Issues from the hand of God, the simple soul" (*CPP* 70).

Early Tudor Drama

To the Editor of the *TLS*

Times Literary Supplement, 1297 (9 Dec 1926) 913

Sir – I must apologise to Dr. Reed for having mistaken a Junius who was only a name in an obscure corner of my memory for a Junius with whom I am on more intimate terms.[1] I presume that I was misled by the juxtaposition of the name of Junius with that of Dryden, these being, as I supposed, the names of two masters of English prose. Such an error, coming from a scholar of Dr. Reed's accuracy, astonished me very much; but I should have realized that it was an error of which Dr. Reed was incapable.

At the same time. I must insist that the last paragraph of Dr. Reed's letter surprises me not a little. To a plain man of letters it is certainly a reversal of values to learn that the scholar of the seventeenth century is "the great Junius" and that the author of the Letters is merely "an anonymous politician of the eighteenth century."

Another point occurs to me. Has Dr. Reed unwittingly provided a clue to the identity of the Junius he despises? Was Sir Philip Francis also acquainted with the fame of "Francis Junius"?[2]

I am, Sir,

THE REVIEWER

NOTES

1. TSE replies to A. W. Reed, whose letter (printed in the same issue) responded to a statement in "More and Tudor Drama," TSE's review of Reed's *Early Tudor Drama*: "Dr. Reed is so accurate in his attributions and dates that we are all the more astonished at learning (p. 123) that Junius and Dryden belong to the same generation. Has Dr. Reed brought to light evidence which antedates Junius a hundred years"? (858). In his letter, Reed identifies Francis Junius (1588-1677) as the editor of Caedmon's *Paraphrase* (1656) and as the donor, sketched by Vandyck, of invaluable manuscripts to the Bodlian Library, stating that it never occurred to him "that there was any possibility of confusion between the great Junius and the anonymous politician of the eighteenth century." At this time, TSE was overseeing the publication of C. W. Everett's edition of *The Letters of Junius* (Faber & Gwyer, 1927) and had taken a sentence

from it as a temporary epigraph for a draft of *Sweeney Agonistes*: "These are the gloomy companions of a disturbed imagination; the melancholy madness of poetry; without the inspiration" (44); a facsimile is in *Stage Sixty Theatre Club Presents Homage to T. S. Eliot* (Globe Theatre, London, 13 June 1965).

2. Sir Philip Francis (1740-1812), British statesman, classical scholar, and reputed author of the pseudonymous *Letters of Junius* (1769-72), which aimed to expose the English government's infringements of the public's constitutional rights.

Medieval Philosophy

An unsigned review of *History of Mediaeval Philosophy* by Maurice De Wulf. Trans. Ernest C. Messenger. Vol. II: *From St. Thomas Aquinas to the End of the Sixteenth Century*

London: Longmans, 1926. Pp. xii + 336.

Times Literary Supplement, 1298 (16 Dec 1926) 929

To write a history of medieval or of scholastic philosophy – the two are not the same thing, and Professor de Wulf has tackled both – is anything but easy, especially when this history, from the beginning to the end of the sixteenth century, is to be condensed within two volumes.[1] The author may either select the dominant philosophers, devote to them as much space as they relatively deserve, and pass hurriedly over the minor epochs and the less significant intermediate names; or he may consider it his task to chronicle the philosophy as a whole, rather than the philosophers. If he chooses the former course, his exposition of the systems of the greatest philosophers will be more satisfactory; but another kind of historical truth is served by the second method. This book follows the latter; it is a chronicle, rather than a valuation. We make this observation first, because the casual reader, looking through these 316 pages into which the thought of four centuries is crammed, may remark that only thirty-seven pages are reserved to St. Thomas, twenty to Duns Scotus, and ten to William of Occam, while the greater part of the book is concerned with philosophers of whom few readers have ever heard and whom fewer still will ever read. The book is a history, not an "introduction." The introduction to medieval philosophy already exists: it is Étienne Gilson's *La Philosophie au Moyen Âge*, two tiny volumes in a popular collection of Payot.[2] The two works perform a different function, and the more tedious completes the more brilliant. It is interesting to observe that Professor de Wulf occupies a Chair at Harvard University, and that Professor Gilson is also lecturing during the current year in this former stronghold of Unitarianism (both, presumably, being sheltered by a building named "Emerson Hall").[3]

Dr. de Wulf's book may serve for the study of scholasticism as a link between the work of Gilson, which consists in detailed exposition of the ideas of the principal philosophers of the thirteen centuries – his recent books on St. Thomas and St. Bonaventura – and the massive *Modern Scholastic Philosophy* of Cardinal Mercier.[4] One prejudice which the work of Professor de Wulf, as well as the work of Professor Gilson, tends to break down is that which consists in the assumption that modern philosophy begins with a complete break from the Middle Ages, with a wholly new examination of the world. The continuity in transformation is insisted upon again and again by Gilson. "La science moderne," he says in his small introduction above mentioned, "prise sous la forme idéale avec laquelle elle se projette dans l'avenir, a hérité de tous les attributs de la théologie chrétienne."[5] Professor de Wulf says (316):

> Contrary to a widely held view, the seventeenth century was not an exceptional period, unique in intellectual history, an absolute commencement devoid of any connection with the mediæval past.

Dr. de Wulf includes in his history such unorthodox figures as Nicholas of Cusa, Campanella and Eckhardt;[6] such social and legal philosophers as Sir Thomas More and Grotius; and such scholastics of the Renaissance as Cajetan and Suarez. The last part of Dr. de Wulf's book, in spite of its somewhat forbidding text-book arrangement and the necessary marshalling of innumerable forgotten names, is a valuable contribution. It confirms the view that no great philosophy ever vanquishes another great philosophy; it annihilates merely its predecessor's degenerate descendants. How can we tell who was the greatest prize-fighter in history, when every champion is ultimately conquered by some younger man?

> The scientists wanted to destroy a still powerful oak tree because it carried dead wood in its branches; the Aristotelians thought that it was impossible to do anything to an age-long tree, and that to despoil it of a dried-up branch would be to deprive it of its life. Scholasticism was vanquished for want of men, not for want of ideas. [313-14]

These words are worth pondering. It is open to us to question, nevertheless, whether scholasticism was not already "conquered" before it came into conflict with any positive discovery of science. First there were the diverging theories of the fourteenth century, and the rise of a native pre-Renaissance mysticism in Germany. And second we feel that new desires arose which

craved different emotional food from that which scholasticism supplied. It was as much the *emotions* as the *ideas* of Aristotle and of St. Thomas which went out of favour: hence the rise of Platonism. The Renaissance Platonists were inferior philosophers to the scholastics of the thirteenth century. Scientific thinking displaced philosophic thinking. If the scientists of the seventeenth century have their descendants, so have philosophers like Pico della Mirandola. We must therefore not think of the change in terms of progress or decay, but as a dissociation of the medieval mind and the formation of new types. There are signs – quite apart from the revival of scholasticism – of an analogous "revolution" coming to pass in our own time.

The chapter which Professor de Wulf devotes to St. Thomas, while it is a careful and conscientious effort of compression, can only have value for those who are prepared to read some special treatise, like that of Gilson (*Le Thomisme*).[7] It has its place, and we do not see how its author could, within the limitations of his method, have done it much better. But such a dissection will hardly correct the impression of St. Thomas which most educated people have received from the conventional manuals of the history of philosophy. Even the chapter devoted to Albertus Magnus and St. Thomas in Gilson's little handbook gives a better impression of the greatness of the thought than can such a "skeletonization."[8] Those who wish to learn about any individual philosopher should go to some other authority than Dr. de Wulf; for a cinematographic view of the period as a whole, and particularly for its compendious account of the interactions of scholasticism with other types of thought in the later Middle Ages and the early Renaissance, the book is highly to be commended.

The bibliography is excellent, although in so vast a field a complete bibliography is hardly to be expected. Mention might have been made of two new, and still unfinished, editions of the *Summa*: that of Blot (text only) and that of Desclée (text with French translation by eminent Dominicans).[9] An interesting book not mentioned in the bibliography is *La Pensée italienne au XVI Siècle*, by J. Roger Charbonnel.[10]

NOTES

1. The Belgian scholar Maurice de Wulf (1867-1947), professor of Thomistic philosophy at the Institut supérieur de philosophie, Louvain, received a chair in medieval philosophy at Harvard in 1919 and lectured in the fall semester there until 1927. This is the fifth edition of his masterwork, *Histoire de la philosophie médiévale* (1900-47), the text increasing with each edition until the third volume appeared in 1947.

2. Gilson, *La Philosophie au Moyen-Âge* [Philosophy in the Middle Ages] (Paris: Payot, 1922).

3. Gilson, professor of medieval philosophy at the Sorbonne, visited Harvard for the 1926 fall semester to teach two courses and to give a lecture to the Harvard Philosophical Club, of which TSE was former president. Emerson Hall, named after Ralph Waldo Emerson, has housed the Department of Philosophy at Harvard since its completion in 1900.

4. Gilson's *La Philosophie de saint Bonaventure* [The Philosophy of St. Bonaventure] appeared in 1924, his *Saint Thomas d'Aquin* in 1925. TSE reviewed Mercier's *A Manual of Modern Scholastic Philosophy* in 1917 (1.601). Cardinal Mercier was de Wulf's mentor and collaborator at Louvain.

5. *Trans*: Modern science, considered in the ideal form with which it projects itself into the future, has inherited all of the attributes of Christian theology. *La Philosophie au Moyen-Âge*, 2:151.

6. Tommaso Campanella (1568-1639), Italian Dominican philosopher and author of *La città del Sole* [The City of the Sun] (1623), which de Wulf characterizes as "a fantastic description of an ideal state in which individual liberty is regulated to the smallest details for the good of the community" (276-77).

7. Gilson, *Le Thomisme: Introduction au système de saint Thomas d'Aquin* (1919), the first of six editions. TSE's signed copy of the 1923 edition is in his library.

8. Albertus Magnus (Albert the Great) (ca. 1206-80), German scholastic philosopher and theologian, was the teacher and mentor of Thomas Aquinas.

9. *Summa Theologica*, 6 vols (Paris: A. Blot, 1926-35); *Somme théologique*, 8 vols (Paris: Société Saint Jean l'Évangéliste, Desclée, 1925-29), with later editions. The translators are identified by abbreviation as members of the Dominican Order of Preachers (O.P.).

10. TSE reviewed Charbonnel's *La Pensée italienne au XVIe siècle et le courant libertin* in "Humanist, Artist, and Scientist" (132).

Mr. J. M. Robertson and Shakespeare

To the Editor of *The Nation and the Athenaeum*

The Nation and the Athenaeum, 40 (18 Dec 1926) 418[1]

Sir, – I was not aware of "Kappa's" contribution to Mr. J. M. Robertson's birthday party until I read Mr. Middleton Murry's letter in *The Nation* of December 4th.[2] If it is not too late to intervene, I should be glad to express my cordial agreement with Mr. Murry's protest. "Kappa's" original comment appears to have been in indifferent taste in the choice of an occasion: but he now carries the controversy beyond the limits of his sneer at Mr. Robertson.[3] The "Kappa" programme, in fact, seems to comprehend a sweeping out of the temple of Shakespeare of such insignificant insects as Professor Pollard, and Professor Dover Wilson, and anyone who has attempted to clear up any of the problems of that bewildering epoch.[4]

No more than "Kappa" do I profess "to have an expert's acquaintance," but at least I have studied these problems. I write as a literary critic who has, like Mr. Murry, paid some attention to this period of English literature; and I am convinced that no literary critic who is concerned with this period to-day can afford to neglect the work of such scholars as those I have mentioned. "Kappa" is, on the other hand, a true Conservative: he likes things to be left as they are. That is to say, since we cannot *prove* to his satisfaction who is responsible for *Titus Andronicus*, we should continue to dishonour the name of Shakespeare with the ascription.[5] "Kappa" may have reason to be satisfied with his own "aesthetic instinct." I refuse to surrender myself to the mercy of the "aesthetic instinct" of Coleridge who can talk glibly about *Richard II* and *Richard III* without mentioning the name of Marlowe.[6]

Yours, etc.,

RUSSELL SQUARE, LONDON, W. C. 1. T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Dated 6 Dec 1926.

2. On 15 Nov 1926, TSE wrote to Robertson, who turned seventy the previous day, "to congratulate you on your birthday party" (*L3* 311). In "Life and Politics," his weekly column for

the *Nation & Athenaeum* of 20 Nov, "Kappa" criticized Robertson for "his remorseless 'disintegration' of Shakespeare" and for attempting to "free him of the accretions of inferior stuff that have crept into the Canon" (261).

3. When John Middleton Murry wrote to protest Kappa's "obscurantism" and to defend the quality of Robertson's scholarship in the issue of 4 Dec, Kappa replied on the same page that while he did not profess "to have an expert's acquaintance with the results of Mr. Robertson's 'disintegration' of the text of Shakespeare," he insisted that "the attempt to break up the mass of plays called Shakespeare's works and to allot authors to scenes and passages of the composite pieces – is a hopeless . . . confusing, and profoundly disturbing business" (333).

4. The bibliographer Alfred W. Pollard (1859-1944), keeper of Printed Books at the British Museum and professor of English Bibliography at the University of London, was author of *Shakespeare's Folios and Quartos* (1909) and *The Foundations of Shakespeare's Text* (1923). J. Dover Wilson (1881-1969), then professor of Education at King's College, London, was working on his career-long project, *The New Shakespeare* (1921-69), a series of editions of the complete plays.

5. TSE wrote to Robertson on 25 Nov 1926: "I have just read *Titus Andronicus* again and it seems to me almost the worst play of the whole epoch." "You are quite right about *Titus*," Robertson responded, "not one scene of it, not a single entire speech, is by Shakespeare" (*L3* 323).

6. In his reply to Murry, Kappa asserted that "it is the greatest of literary tragedies that Shakespeare did not sort out and edit his plays for posterity. In the circumstances one is left to one's aesthetic instinct, if that is the right phrase; the instinct which the greatest of Shakespeare critics, Coleridge, possessed pre-eminently" (333). Coleridge discusses *Richard II* and *Richard III* in lecture XII of his 1811-12 "Lectures on Shakspere and Milton," wherein he proclaims "the superiority of Shakspere to other dramatists" but does not mention his debt to Marlowe's *Edward II*. *Lectures and Notes upon Shakespeare and Other English Poets*, ed. T. Ashe (London: George Bell and Sons, 1883), 148.

Whitman and Tennyson

A review of *Whitman: An Interpretation in Narrative* by Emory Holloway

New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1926. Pp. xv + 330.

The Nation and the Athenaeum, 40 (18 Dec 1926) 426

This book is in no way a critical examination of Whitman's work; it has nothing to say – thank God! – about Whitman's influence upon *vers libre* and contemporary American verse; it is silent about Whitman's present standing in American literature. Mr. Van Wyck Brooks would have made the subject the occasion for an elegy, Mr. Mencken for a diatribe upon democracy. Mr. Holloway's subject is "Whitman the Man" and his environment, and he keeps to the matter in hand.[1] The book is written in an artless style, which ends by pleasing; and in the end we think of all the things the book might have been and is not, and give the author thanks. It is, I should suppose, as good a *biography* of Whitman as has been written or is likely to be. For it makes us realize (and I am sure that this is a token of its merit) that a critical appreciation of Whitman's poetry must take account of place and time. And this the book does without pretending to make any critical estimate itself. It is a modest and efficient book.

The time, of course, is the epoch of American history known to readers of *Martin Chuzzlewit*.[2] To most Europeans, I imagine, this is a time which hardly exists; its difference, that is, from the Colonial Period (which we may say ended in 1829 with the defeat of Adams by Jackson) on the one hand, and the Age of Jazz on the other.[3] But with relation to Whitman, it must be recognized that his was a time with a character of its own, and one in which it was possible to hold certain notions, and many illusions, which are now untenable. Now Whitman was (and this Mr. Holloway's book makes abundantly clear) a "man with a message," even if that message was sometimes badly mutilated in transmission; he was interested in what he had to say; he did not think of himself primarily as the inventor of a new technique of versification. His "message" must be reckoned with, and it is a very different message from that of Mr. Carl Sandburg.

The world of the American voyage in *Martin Chuzzlewit* is the same. Dickens knew best what it looked like, but Whitman knew what it felt like. There is another interesting parallel: *Leaves of Grass* appeared in 1856, *Les Fleurs du mal* in 1857: could any age have produced more heterogeneous leaves and flowers? The contrasts should be noted. But perhaps more important than these contrasts is the similarity of Whitman to another master, one whose greatness he always recognized and whose eminence he always acknowledged generously – to Tennyson. Between the ideas of the two men, or, rather, between the relations of the ideas of each to his place and time, between the ways in which each held his ideas, there is a fundamental resemblance. Both were born laureates. Whitman, of course, fought hard against corruption, against Press servility, against slavery, against alcohol (and I dare say Tennyson would have done so under the same conditions); but essentially he was satisfied – too satisfied – with things as they are. His labourers and pioneers (at that date all Anglo-Saxon, or at least North European, labourers and pioneers) are the counterpart to Tennyson's great broad-shouldered Englishman at whom Arnold pokes fun; Whitman's horror at the monarchical tyranny of Europe is the counterpart to Tennyson's comment on the revolutions of French politics, no "graver than a schoolboy's barring out."[4] Baudelaire, on the other hand, was a disagreeable person who was rarely satisfied with anything: *je m'ennuie en France*, he wrote, *où tout le monde ressemble à Voltaire*.[5]

I do not mean to suggest that all discontent is divine, or that all self-righteousness is loathesome. On the contrary, both Tennyson and Whitman made satisfaction almost magnificent. It is not the best aspect of their verse; if neither of them had more, neither of them would be still a great poet. But Whitman succeeds in making America as it was, just as Tennyson made England as it was, into something grand and significant. You cannot quite say that either was deceived, and you cannot at all say that either was insincere, or the victim of popular cant. They had the faculty – Whitman perhaps more prodigiously than Tennyson – of transmuting the real into an ideal. Whitman had the ordinary desires of the flesh; for him there was no chasm between the real and the ideal, such as opened before the horrified eyes of Baudelaire. But this, and the "frankness" about sex for which he is either extolled or mildly reproved, did not spring from any particular honesty or clearness of vision: it sprang from what may be called either "idealization" or a faculty for make-believe, according as we are disposed. There is, fundamentally, no difference between the Whitman frankness

and the Tennyson delicacy, except in its relation to public opinion of the time. And Tennyson liked monarchs, and Whitman liked presidents. Both were conservative, rather than reactionary or revolutionary; that is to say, they believed explicitly in progress, and believed implicitly that progress consists in things remaining much as they are.

If this were all there is to Whitman, it would still be a great deal; he would remain a great representative of America, but emphatically of an America which no longer exists. It is not the America of Mr. Scott Fitzgerald, or Mr. Dos Passos, or Mr. Hemingway – to name some of the more interesting of contemporary American writers.[6] If I may draw still one more comparison, it is with Hugo. Beneath all the declamations there is another tone, and behind all the illusions there is another vision. When Whitman speaks of the lilacs or of the mocking-bird, his theories and beliefs drop away like a needless pretext.[7]

T. S. ELIOT

NOTES

1. Emory Holloway (1885-1977), Whitman scholar at Adelphi College and editor of the two-volume *The Uncollected Poetry and Prose of Walt Whitman* (1921).

2. Dickens visited America in 1842 and ruthlessly satirized its inhabitants as dirty, selfish, and barbaric in episodes of *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit* (serialized 1843-44).

3. President John Quincy Adams served in the White House from 1825 to 1829; he lost the 1828 election to Andrew Jackson (1767-1845), who waged a fierce campaign and accused Adams of corruption. Jackson was president from 1829 to 1837. The Jazz Age originated in New Orleans and spread north in the 1920s as Americans became enamored of the new flamboyant styles of music, dance, and fashion.

4. From the conclusion to Tennyson's *The Princess* (1847): "Revolts, republics, revolutions, most / No graver than a schoolboys' barring out; / Too comic for the solemn things they are." The next stanza features Tennyson's description of the aristocratic Sir Walter Vivian as "a great broad-shoulder'd genial Englishman." *The Poems of Alfred Tennyson, 1830-1863* (London: Dent, 1906), 424. In *Culture and Anarchy*, chapter III, Arnold remarks the aristocratic conservatism of Tennyson's "'great broad-shouldered genial Englishman' . . . who saves us from the 'revolts, republics, revolutions, most no graver than a schoolboy's barring out,' which upset other and less broad-shouldered nations" (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1869), 119. TSE included "Tennyson's broad-shouldered genial Englishman" as a modern representative of the comic English myth in "The Romantic Englishman, the Comic Spirit, and the Function of Criticism" (302).

5. *Trans*: "I am bored in France, especially as every one resembles Voltaire." From section XXIV of Baudelaire's *Mon cœur mis à nu* [My Heart Laid Bare], in *Œuvres posthumes et Correspondances inédites* (Paris: Quantin, 1887), 102; *read:* "je m'ennuie en France, surtout parce que tout le monde y ressemble à Voltaire." 121. Trans. Joseph Shipley, *Baudelaire: His Prose and Poetry* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1919), 232.

6. After F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940) sent him an inscribed copy of *The Great Gatsby* (1925), TSE wrote on 31 Dec 1925 that "it has interested and excited me more than any new novel I have seen, either English or American, for a number of years. . . . In fact it seems to me to be the first step that American fiction has taken since Henry James" (*L2* 813). TSE hoped that Fitzgerald would allow Faber to publish the novel in England and that he would contribute stories for the *Criterion*; neither came to fruition. John Dos Passos (1896-1970) received prominent recognition with the publication of his sixth novel, *Manhattan Transfer*, in 1925. Ernest Hemingway (1898-1961) published both his novella *The Torrents of Spring* and his first novel, *The Sun Also Rises*, in 1926.

7. TSE alludes to Whitman's poems in *Leaves of Grass*: "When Lilacs Last in the Door-Yard Bloom'd" and "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking" (the second line of which reads, "Out of the mocking-bird's throat").

This page intentionally left blank

INDEX

Abbott, George, 817, 827n3
About, Edmond, 49, 52n3
Action Français, xxvi, 96n8, 277, 526n4
Adams, Henry Brooks, 41–47
Adams, John, 41, 45, 46n2
Adams, John Quincy, 41, 46n2, 876, 878n3
Addison, Joseph, 354, 360n20, 793n2
The Adelphi, xxix–xxx, 447n2, 467n7, 534n10, 644n26, 766n6
Aeschylus, 34, 187, 197, 242, 280, 504–05, 773
Aiken, Conrad, xx, xxxixn18, 66–69, 71nn11–14, 129, 131n4
Aldington, Richard, xx–xxii, xxviii, xxxii, 32n15, 130, 131nn2,5–6, 160n1, 201nn26–27, 261n4, 324, 330–31nn1–2, 331n5, 337, 339n16, 347n24, 348n20, 359n1, 366n7, 368n26, 383n1, 384n14, 385n26, 388nn1–2, 393n4, 397n1, 409n1, 416n3, 443n1, 447n1, 453n10, 470n1, 476–80n4, 510n7, 526n5, 532, 534n14, 548, 579nn1,8, 664n13, 721n20, 739n10, 740n22, 779n2, 841n7, 855n2
allusion, 315, 620, 819
Anacreon, 320n5, 325, 331n5
Anaxagoras, 227
Andrewes, Lancelot, xxxvii, xxxviii, 13, 15n15, 165–69n4, 328, 522, 526n6, 758n31, 817–29
Anglicanism, xxxvii–xxxviii, 597, 609, 750, 817, 821. *See also* Church of England
Annahme, 88n18, 562, 565n21, 639m, 647n51. *See also* Meinong
anthropology, 96n2, 138–40, 197–98, 200nn18,21,22, 420, 422n23, 514, 517–18n6, 536, 538nn2–4, 538n3, 764, 776n11
Aquinas, Thomas, xxxi, 192n13, 307n4, 598, 599n9, 613–14, 629, 637, 641, 642n5, 651, 653, 659, 663n12, 667nn33–34, 706, 708, 721n19, 736, 750, 799, 800n9, 818, 836, 839–40, 841n16, 866nn7–8, 870–72, 873n8
Archer, William, 11, 170, 174n2, 193, 194nn2,4, 341, 346n6, 504–09, 509n6, 510nn7,10,12,16, 511n24, 541, 544n17, 550–51, 556, 556n1, 557n11, 773, 776n11
Ariosto, Ludovico, 77, 80n2
Aristophanes, 9n36, 151, 161n9, 259n33, 474–75n8, 700n7
Aristotle, xviii, 114n25, 132–34, 136n6, 192n13, 196, 203–04, 221, 232, 236n26, 238, 267–69, 271n12, 280–81, 283, 284n7, 285n14, 473, 529, 558n23, 606, 621, 625n21, 646, 651, 654, 663n9, 665n23, 667nn33,36, 753, 828n20, 838–41, 866n8, 872
Arlen, Michael, 786, 788n4
Arnold, Matthew, xviii, xxvi, 47n13, 52n1, 54, 58n3, 120n5, 128n17, 190, 238, 262, 269, 270n5, 272n17, 286, 288, 290n9, 291–92, 294–96, 298–99nn3,10, 320n9, 333–35, 338nn4,6, 353, 360n16, 404, 414n3, 424–25, 440n5, 444, 448–49, 459, 463, 466–67nn1,3,11,20, 486, 529, 539, 543n3, 544, 545nn21,23, 568, 570nn5,7, 639, 646n49, 706, 714, 723n42, 737, 754–55n2, 825, 829n33, 877, 878n4
Art & Letters, xvi–xvii, xxviii, 6nn1–2, 66, 130, 300
Ascham, Roger, 83, 87n5, 598, 630, 643–44n20
Ashley, William James, 540, 544n10
The Athenaeum, xv–xxi, xxix, 25n15, 120n19, 131n5, 160–61n1, 212–13, 222–23n1, 223n7, 226, 234n2, 337, 339–40n20, 344, 347nn24,25, 348
Augustine, 629, 641, 642n5, 647n56, 667n33
Austen, Jane, 57, 58–59n8, 79
Averroes, 637, 646n41

Babbitt, Irving, xxx, 275, 276–77n7, 286–89, 289n3, 408, 410n14, 765, 766n2, 787, 815n1, 838
Bacon, Francis, 134, 180n9, 625n15
Bairnsfather, Bruce, 101, 104n28
Baldwin, Stanley, 777–78, 779nn1,4
Balfour, A. J., 407, 409n10, 493, 516, 830
ballet, xxiv, 173, 221–22, 282, 363, 434–35, 437n13, 506–07, 567, 569, 570n1, 581–84, 773. *See also* Ballets Russes
Ballets Russes, xxv, 225n23, 337, 340n26, 362–63, 367nn12–14, 369–70, 434–35, 436n10, 510n14, 543, 567, 570n2, 773; and *Le Sacre du printemps*, 365n1, 369–70, 372n3, 373nn4–5, 534, 545nn27,29. *See also* Diaghilev; Lopokova; Massine; Nijinsky; Sokolova
Balzac, Honoré de, 48–53, 598n3, 684n19, 742

Barbey d'Aurevilly, Jules Amédée, 306, 307n4, 742–43, 755n3, 805, 806n2
Barrie, J. M., 101, 104n28
Bateman, H. M., 343, 347n20
Baudelaire, Charles, 83, 216, 306–08, 309–10, 313, 324, 336, 343, 347n19, 361n34, 382, 384n12, 385n30, 427, 441–42, 451, 454n16, 560n23, 566, 570n10, 587n4, 615, 619, 622, 625n19, 649, 699, 713, 742–44, 746, 748, 755n3, 756n15, 843–46, 877, 878n5
Beach, Joseph Warren, x, xlv, 479, 534, 812–16
Beach, Sylvia, 479n1, 534n13
Beddoes, T. L., 118, 121n25, 243n3
Bel Esprit scheme, 416–17
belief, 44, 639, 669, 678–79, 725, 738n2, 742–43, 748, 750, 771–72, 836, 864. *See also* Dante; Donne; Richards
Bell, Clive, xv, xxvii, xxxixn3, 40n1, 396, 398n6
Bell, Vanessa, xxxii, lii
Bellarmine, Robert, 629, 642n6, 817, 826n2, 863
du Bellay, Joachim, 28, 32n15
Belleforest, François de, 123, 127n8
Belloc, Hilaire, 55, 58
Benda, Julien, xviii, xxix, xxx, li, 275, 276n3, 287, 290n7, 291–93, 307n2, 489, 519–20 text n, 765, 766n2, 787
Benlowes, Edward, 612, 624n9, 682–83, 760 text n
Bennett, Arnold, 54, 58nn2,3, 62, 400, 404, 411, 414n3, 483, 486, 488n15, 567, 570n3
Bergson, Henri, 197, 200n19, 281, 285n11, 291–92, 292n5, 343, 347n18, 365, 368n25, 374n15, 492–93, 516, 518n11, 520 text n, 556n2, 565n20, 651, 836, 841n7
Bergsonism, 291–92, 651
Berkeley, George, 133–34, 426, 450, 676
Bernhardt, Sarah, xxix, lii, 433–35, 436n2
Birkhead, Edith, 603, 607n4
Blake, William, 14n3, 74, 79, 82n15, 187–92, 194n3, 614, 625n15, 737–38, 741nn41–42, 747, 751, 844, 846
Blast, 304n1, 454n17, 526n5
Blunden, Edmund, 590, 591n4, 721n24
Bodin, Jean, 848–49, 850n3
Boethius, 795, 796n1
Boiardo, Matteo Maria, 77, 80n2
Boileau-Despréaux, Nicholas, 204, 210n9, 267, 271n13, 290n10, 324, 561, 565n17, 753
Bolingbroke, Henry St. John, 407, 409n9, 522, 535n16, 718, 724n58, 737, 770n2
Bonaventure, St., 629, 642n5, 663n12, 871
Borel, Petris, 49, 52n3
Born, Bertran de, 142, 145nn6,8, 231, 235n21, 741n39
Bosanquet, Bernard, xxxi, 493, 516, 519n13
Bosanquet, Theodora, xxxi
Bossuet, Jacques-Bénigne, 139n5
Bottomley, Horatio, 302, 305n7
Bowles, William Lisle, 77, 81n4
Boyle, Robert, 248–49, 258n20
Bradley, A. C., 119, 121n28, 407, 410n11
Bradley, F. H., xxvii, 121n28, 281, 285n12, 371, 373n13, 410n11, 425–26, 449–50, 453n8, 490, 492–93, 513, 515–17, 517nn3,4, 518n10, 519nn12–13, 539–40, 543nn1,3–5, 544n7, 577, 579n7, 626n23, 641, 647n51, 665n23, 749
Bradley, Henry, 603, 607n2
Bragg, W. H., 540, 544n9
Breton, Andre, 743, 755n6
Bridges, Robert, 337, 340n22, 401, 406, 409n4, 484, 487n10
Briggs, L. B. R., 442, 444n8
Bright, John, 41, 46n4
Brightman, F. E., 820–21, 827n16, 828n17
Brome, Richard, 117, 120n16, 158, 163n41, 280
Brooke, Brian, 11, 14n6
Brooke, Rupert, xlvi, 13, 15n17, 19n1, 401, 484
Brooks, Peter Chardon, 41, 46n3
Brooks, Van Wyck, xxiv, 876
Browne, Sir Thomas, 167, 324, 327, 328, 331, 332, 425, 448, 449, 532, 535
Browning, Elizabeth Barrett, 36, 140n9
Browning, Robert, 24, 25n13, 57, 62, 141–42, 170, 192n14, 216–17, 224n13, 240, 243n2, 279, 284n5, 307n6, 310, 319, 335, 380, 381, 385n22, 424, 448, 534n8, 561, 616, 625n22, 641, 695, 737, 746, 749, 774
Brunetière, Ferdinand, 57, 59n10, 471, 474n2
Bruno, Giordano, 132–36
Buddha, xvi, 167–68, 581, 677
Buddhism, 169n7, 268n22, 581, 583; pseudo-, 746
Burleson, Albert Sidney, 397, 398n8
Burns, Robert, 736, 790
Busby, Olive Mary, 471–72, 474nn1,4
Butcher, S. H., 285n14, 473, 475n9, 625
Butler, Samuel (novelist), 190, 192n15, 594, 595n7, 687, 699n2, 700n3, 767n7, 772
Butler, Samuel (poet), 467n16, 667n32, 687, 700n3
Byford, Roy, 302, 304n2, 532, 535n19
Byron, Lord (George Gordon), 22, 25n7, 77–80, 81nn5,6, 279, 284n4, 294, 298n1, 302, 304n5, 306, 350, 441, 444, 523–24, 527n11, 561, 593, 742–43, 792, 794n9, 844, 846
Bürger, Gottfried, 78, 81n10

Cajetan (Tommaso de Vio Gaetani), 629, 642n8, 871
Calvin, John, 629, 642n7
Calvinism, 134, 631–32, 693, 706, 826
Campanella, Tommaso, 871, 873n6
Campbell, A. J. D., 581, 583n1
Campbell, Killis, 22, 25nn6,7
Campion, Thomas, 29, 32n17, 33, 38n5, 182, 185n7, 204, 210n9, 212, 268
Canning, George, 594, 595n6, 791, 793n4
Carew, Thomas, 612, 682, 735, 740n31
caricature, xvii, 43, 101–02, 159, 253, 343–44, 347n22, 354. *See also* Bateman; Baudelaire; Hogarth; Lewis; Rowlandson
Carlyle, Thomas, xxvi, 148, 229, 424–25, 448–49, 452nn2,4, 606, 608n13, 647n59
Carter, Hubert, 525, 527n15
Casaubon, Issac, 819, 827n11
Cather, Willa, 813, 816n4
Catholicism, 460–61, 598n5, 644n26, 719n6, 736, 775nn6,9, 799, 818, 836
Catullus, Gaius Valerius, 198, 278, 284n2, 311–13, 321nn12,16, 322n21, 615–16, 625n17, 649, 679
Cavalcanti, Guido, xxxiv, 145nn6,8, 380, 598n1, 618, 626n31, 636, 655, 666n25, 669, 677–78, 685n25, 750, 837, 839, 841n14, 843, 846
Cecchetti, Enrico, 567, 570n1
Cecil, Robert, 818, 827n4
Cellier, Frank, 525, 527n15
Cendrars, Blaise, 743, 755nn5,8
Chamberlayne, William, 612, 624n9
Channing, William Ellery, 772, 775n9
Chaplin, Charlie, 303, 305n10, 435, 437n12, 473
Chapman, George, 67, 70n2, 118, 120nn19,20, 121nn21,22, 123, 127n9, 128n14, 178, 245, 248, 375, 379, 385n21, 386, 443, 503, 509, 509n1, 511n22, 546, 548–58, 576, 579n1, 603–08, 626, 631, 644n22, 695, 702nn40–41, 703, 737, 748, 752, 758nn28–29,32, 760 text n, 800n5, 863–64, 866n22
Charbonnel, J.-Roger, vi, 132–35, 135nn1,2, 872, 873n10
Charles I (King of England), 310, 320n8, 612, 718, 725, 738n1
Charles II (King of England), 16, 19n4, 311, 320n7, 320–21n10, 685n38, 738n1, 740n25, 793n6
Chateaubriand, François-René de, 49, 52n3, 304n6
Chaucer, Geoffrey, xxxvii, 92, 94, 206, 236n29, 354, 456, 590, 593, 595n4, 649, 687, 754, 759n35, 795–96, 804n7, 807–11, 816n5, 857
Chekhov (or Tchehov), Anton, 55, 58n6, 282, 285n18, 342, 773
Chelli, Maurice, 852–55
Chesterfield, Fourth Earl of (Philip Stanhope), 2, 8n15
Chesterton, G. K. (Gilbert Keith), 55, 58, 58n5, 59n13, 295, 299n7, 302, 304n4, 400, 404, 483, 486, 488n15
churches, London, xxv, 345, 348nn29–32, 349n24, 818, 831–32, 832nn4–5, 833nn6–10
Churchill, Charles, 350, 359n2, 593, 595n3, 687, 700n4, 736, 791, 793n3
Church of England, xxxviii, 196, 708, 817–19, 826, 831–32; "English Catholic Church," 819. *See also* Anglicanism
Cibber, Colley, 792, 793–94n8
cinema, xxiv, 61, 222, 282, 303, 343, 418–20, 433, 435, 541, 569, 570n11, 787; super-, 362, 366n10
Clarendon, 1st Earl of (Edward Hyde), 425, 449, 522, 526n6, 609, 751, 817, 827n3
Clark, W. G., 768, 770n1
classicism, xxvi, xxx, 275–77, 460–62, 467n7, 468n24, 477–78, 521–22, 526n3, 556n5, 561, 632, 644n26, 764–65, 842n18. *See also* Benda; Hulme; Maurras; romanticism
Claudel, Paul, 88 text n1, 175n9, 281, 285n10, 587n4, 847n1
Clemenceau, Georges Benjamin, 334, 338–39n10
Cleveland, John, 312, 321n19, 376, 383, 443, 444n11, 457, 612, 681–82, 716, 724, 760 text n
closet drama, 170, 774
Clutton-Brock, Arthur, 239nn1–4,6, 344, 348n26, 406, 408, 410nn13,15, 462, 467n18, 531, 534n11
Cobden, Richard, 542, 545n25
Cobden-Sanderson, Richard, xvii–xxviii, xxxviii, 499n12, 563n1, 765–66n1, 774n1
Cochrane, Frank, 525, 527n15
Cocteau, Jean, 392, 393n5, 433, 436nn4,10, 545, 570, 743, 755nn5,7, 840n3
Codrington, R. H., 138, 139n8, 140n11, 491, 514, 517–18n6
Cohen, Hermann, 676, 684n21
Cohen-Portheim, Paul, 542, 544n18
Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, 77–79, 81nn4,5, 82n14, 115–16, 119n4, 122, 126–27n3, 203–04, 210nn6,9, 225n24, 238, 244, 250, 257n2, 262, 268, 314, 466, 468n29, 503, 529, 695, 736, 741n37, 753, 866n15, 874, 875n6
Colet, John, 607n11, 629, 643n13
Collett, Mary, 707, 719n11

Collins, John Churton, 54, 58n3
Collins, William, 188, 313, 318, 380, 641, 647n54, 715, 736
Colvin, Sir Sidney, 344, 348n27, 406, 409n7
comedy, in literature, 1–9, 101, 117, 151–61, 163n41, 221, 252–57, 261n3, 282, 302–05, 338n1, 342, 354, 357, 363, 472–75, 532–33, 578, 768, 786, 790–94, 802, 857, 858n2, 878n4; social, xvii, 3, 171, 282, 510n13; popular and music hall, xxv, 104, 282–83, 285n16, 291, 292n4, 302–05, 342–43, 346n10, 347nn16,19–20, 418–20, 436nn6,9, 511n16, 524. *See also* caricature; Guitry; Jonson; Lloyd; music halls; Seyler
Comedy of Humours, 154–60, 162n22, 163n41. *See also* Jonson
Commines, Philippe de, 177, 180n10
Conington, John, 687, 700, 701
Conrad, Joseph, 35–36, 38n18, 49, 62, 184, 400, 404, 427, 450, 483, 486, 539, 543n2, 813, 837
Cook, A. B., 138, 139n7, 197, 200n21, 491, 514, 517–18n6
Cooper, Anthony Ashley, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury, 360n8, 793n6
Cooper, Thomas, 670, 683n3
Copernicus, 134
Corbière, Tristan, xxxvii, 216–17, 224n15, 382, 489, 619, 743, 746–48, 755–56n11, 757n25, 758n26
Corneille, Pierre, 2, 5, 8n16, 9n35, 357, 772
Cornford, Francis M., 197, 200n21, 473–75, 491, 514, 517–18n6
Coterie, 15n12, 31n14, 129–31, 340n20
Cottle, Joseph, 78, 81n10
Coward, Noel, 786, 788n4
Cowley, Abraham, 310, 312, 318, 320n5, 321n19, 322n24, 323n40, 352, 354, 375–76, 378, 383, 612–13, 620, 622–27, 638, 683, 686, 699, 718, 724–40, 748, 752, 760 text n
Cowper, William, 77, 81n4, 170, 174n2, 350
Crabbe, George, 79, 279, 284n4, 350, 687, 700n4, 790
Crashaw, Richard, 375, 378, 383, 384n7, 596–99, 610, 612, 620, 622, 637, 641–42, 647n58, 653, 680, 682, 683, 686, 698–99, 705–26, 728, 734–36, 738–39, 741, 746, 748, 752, 754, 760 text n, 798–99, 800nn9,10, 818, 863, 866n17
Crashaw, William, 706, 719n6
creative evolution, 371–72, 374n15, 518n11. *See also* Bergson; Shaw
Crees, J. H. E., 293
Creevey, Thomas, 364, 368n23
Crémieux, Benjamin, 489, 519 text n
The Criterion, xvii, xxi, xxiv, xxvi, xxviii–xxviv, xxx, 6n1, 409n8, 416, 446, 480n4, 500–01, 501n1, 524, 526n2, 527n17, 531, 534nn13,14, 531n1, 538n2, 548, 558, 563n1, 568, 570n4, 578, 585, 587, 592, 644n26, 567, 879; *The New Criterion*, xxx, xxxiii–xxxiv, 762–64, 765n1, 787
Croce, Benedetto, 238, 239n4, 753, 759n33, 805
Cronyn, George W., 137, 139–40
Crothers, Samuel McChord, 334, 335, 338n7, 339n12
Cruickshank, A. H., xi, 244–45, 248–50, 253, 257–59, 852, 855n2
Cruikshank, George, 343, 347n21, 427, 451
Cubism, 16, 131n9, 363, 524. *See also* Picasso
Cunliffe, J. W., 60–65
Curtius, E. R., 517n4, 596, 598n3, 780n6

Daborne, Robert, 853, 855n5
dadaism (dada), 66, 68, 70n7, 220–21, 305n6, 306–07, 476, 746. *See also* Tzara
Dalcroze, Émile Jaques-, 195, 199n4
dance, 347n16, 421n12, 471–73, 544n16, 545n19, 581–84, 773, 776n11. *See also* ballet; Ballets Russes
Daniel, Arnaut, 142, 145nn6,8, 211n12, 231, 235n21, 662n1
Daniel, Samuel, 29, 32n17, 740, 858n3, 863–64, 866n22
Dante, xviii, xix, xxxiv–xxxvii, 17, 35, 77, 80n2, 110, 113n18, 114nn19–20, 145n8, 150–51, 185–86n12, 187, 189–92, 217, 224nn15,16, 226–37, 279, 306, 307n4, 316–17, 326, 380, 385n24, 386, 408, 410n14, 411, 456, 548–49, 554–55, 558n20, 562, 590, 597, 609, 612–19, 623–27, 637, 640, 643n18, 644n24, 648–59, 661–63, 666–72, 676–79, 683, 696, 699, 701n24, 707–08, 714, 718–21, 723n45, 726, 735–38, 741n39, 742–43, 747–51, 754, 757nn21,25, 795–96, 808, 818, 827n15, 843–46, 864–67
Darling, Charles John, 362, 365
Darwin, Charles, 372, 471, 474nn2–3, 542, 634
Darwin, Erasmus, 736, 740n32
Darwinism, 44, 192n15, 374n15, 471, 474nn2,3, 542, 776n10. *See also* evolution, theory of
Davies, Sir John, xxxvii, 733, 740n27, 858n3, 860–67
Davies, W. H., 755
da Vinci, Leonardo, 27, 31n7, 332
Defoe, Daniel, 801–04
Dekker, Thomas, 801–04
De la Mare, Walter, 191n1, 590, 591n4
Dell, Floyd, 813, 816n4

democracy, 35, 339n16, 394–95, 419, 523, 525, 542, 573, 634, 769, 876
Democritus, 227, 234n3
Denham, John, 280, 284n8, 324, 350, 522, 612, 622–24, 676, 680, 724n57, 732
Descartes, René, 132, 133, 623, 627n44, 635, 637, 645nn33,36,38, 698, 703n51, 849, 850n7
devotional literature, 375, 622, 661, 683, 708, 818
Dewey, John, 814, 816n5
Diaghilev, Sergei, xxv, 225n23, 337, 340n26, 362–63, 367nn12,14, 372n3, 433, 436n4, 510n14, 543, 545n27, 567, 570n2, 582
The Dial, xxiv, 333, 397n2, 412, 414n6, 450, 495, 577
Dickens, Charles, 47n18, 101, 158, 260, 261n1, 295, 305n7, 320n8, 339n15, 346n4, 391, 424, 428, 448, 451, 742, 754–55n2, 877, 878n2
Diderot, Denis, 3, 8n18, 371, 634, 758n30, 837
Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite, 598, 599n9, 607n11, 630, 637, 643n13, 646n43
disintegration of the intellect, xxxv, 609, 699, 713–14, 717, 743–44, 748, 750, 753–54, 760. *See also* dissociation of sensibility
Disraeli, Benjamin, 30, 32n23, 364, 573, 775n6
dissociation of sensibility, xiii, xxiii, xxxv, 365, 379–80, 706, 713–14; and de Gourmont, 468n27. *See also* disintegration of the intellect
Dobrée, Bonamy, 103n13, 576, 579n1, 833n7, 840n3
Donne, John, xvi, xxiii, xxxiv–xxxv, xxxvii, 64, 118, 150, 156, 165–69, 248, 309, 312, 320n4, 322n24, 327–28, 331n13, 332n24, 375–76, 379–84, 440–44, 455, 457n2, 546, 549, 553–55, 596–99, 609–761 (passim, The Clark Lectures), 790, 798, 800n6, 803, 819–20, 824–28, 843–44, 846–47, 856, 858n5, 864, 865n2
Dos Passos, John, 878, 879n6
Dostoevski, Fyodor, 50, 53n9, 57, 412–15, 427, 451, 454n16, 491, 514, 548–49, 552–58, 606, 616, 635, 695, 843, 845,
Doughty, Charles Montagu, 427, 450–51, 453n13
Douglas, Clifford Hugh, 541, 544n14
Douglas, Gawain, 93, 96n4, 178, 180n15
Dowson, Ernest, 216, 223n12, 346n12, 384n6, 400, 443, 483, 487nn4,6,8
Drayton, Michael, 29, 32n18, 858n3
Dreiser, Theodore, 812–13, 816n3
Drinkwater, John, 19n1, 335, 339n13, 400–01, 483–84
Drury, Sir Robert, 694, 702n39
Dryden, John, xxi–xxiii, xxxi–xxxiii, 54, 150, 161n3, 193–94, 203–04, 210n9, 238, 252–53, 258n29, 268, 310, 317–18, 324, 326, 350–61, 380–83, 386–87, 404, 444n11, 486, 499n7, 524, 527–28n18, 535n22, 546–47, 593, 612–13, 623, 624nn8,11, 627n40, 673, 676–77, 680, 688–90, 701n17, 718, 722n37, 725–26, 729–36, 739–41, 753, 791–93, 858–59, 868
Dudley, Lady Mary, 15n12
Dujardin, Edouard, 260, 261, 323
Dunbar, William, 593, 595n4, 687, 700nn5–6, 790
Duncan, Raymond, 372, 373n14
Duncan-Jones, A. S., 169
Durkheim, Émile, 138, 197, 200n21, 491, 514, 536, 538n4

Eckhart, Johannes (Meister Eckhart), 637, 646n43, 651, 663n10, 871
The Egoist (periodical), xv, xvi, 69n1, 112n1, 201n28, 223n1
The Egoist Press, xvii, 141, 201, 223n1, 225n25, 304, 413n2, 479n1, 495, 531–32, 534n13
Einstein, Albert, xxv, 362, 365n1, 366n3, 372, 374n15, 478, 749
Eliot, Charlotte (Champe; TSE's mother), 300, 771, 774n1
Eliot, T. S., poems and plays: *Animula*, 626n29, 867n24; *Ara Vos Prec*, xiii, xvii, 31n14, 161n4, 300, 301n2, 338n5, 398n6, 592, 647n53, 662n1; *Ash-Wednesday*, 332n16; "The *Boston Evening Transcript*," 8n17; "Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar," xvii, 6n2, 47n19, 88n14, 114n22, 140n11, 666n29; *Burnt Norton*, 70n2, 663n9; "A Cooking Egg," 15n12, 31n14, 130n2; "Doris's Dream Songs," 548; *Four Quartets*, 598n5; "Gerontion," 15n15, 70n3, 702n41, 828nn25,26; "The Hollow Men," xxxvi, 564n11; "Journey of the Magi," 169n4, 828n27; *Little Gidding*, 224n16, 683n5, 847n5; "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," 235n21, 321n18, 384n10, 388n1, 432n2, 703n43; "Marina," 70n3; "Morning at the Window," 388n1; *Poems* (1919), xv, 301n2, 534n15; *Poems* (1920), xvii, 261n4, 301n2, 388n2; *Poems, 1909–1925*, xiii, xxxvi, 161n4, 211n12, 647n53; "Preludes," 388n1; *Prufrock and Other Observations*, xiii–xv, 161n4, 222n1, 300–01, 389n3, 498n1, 534n13, 592; "Song to the Opherian," 304n1; *Sweeney Agonistes*, xxix, xxxvi, 509n1, 511n17, 517–18n6, 776n12, 869n1; —as "Fragment of a Prologue" and "Fragment of an Agon,"

Eliot, T. S., poems and plays (*continued*) 776n12; "Sweeney among the Nightingales," 104n32, 114n22; "Sweeney Erect," xvii, 6n2, 224n15, 757–58n25; *The Waste Land*, xiii, xvi, xxi, xxiv–xxv, xxvii–xxix, xxxii–xxxiii, 88n14, 169n7, 211n12, 235n21, 298n1, 305n7, 308n8, 321n13, 332n16, 348n29, 349nn33–34, 366nn4,8, 367n15, 397n1, 398n9, 432n2, 439, 498n1, 517–18n6, 534n15, 558n21, 579n8, 592, 644n26, 645nn34,35, 665n18, 684n22, 703n43, 738n2, 757n19, 833n6; *The Waste Land: A Facsimile*, 174n5, 235n19, 545n20, 566n23; "Whispers of Immortality," 19n6
Eliot, Vivien (née Haigh-Wood; TSE's first wife), xiv, xxv, xxxiv, xxxvi, 64n7, 174n1, 300, 409n1, 572, 575n1, 592
Elizabeth I (Queen of England), 32n19, 258n26, 296, 605, 686, 694, 702n37, 721n21, 817–19, 827n4, 863
Elton, Oliver, 603, 607n1
Elyot, Sir Thomas, 83, 87n5, 856, 858n4
Emerson, Ralph Waldo, 23, 43, 46n9, 565–66n23, 606, 713, 723n40, 744, 756n15, 772, 775n9, 873n3
Empedocles, 227, 234n3
Empson, William, xxxv, 360n7, 647n55
epic, 229, 231, 235n14, 278, 478, 614
Epictetus, 571n12
Epstein, Jacob, 362, 365n2, 381, 584n7
Epstein, Jean, 381, 385n27
Erasmus, Desiderius, 856, 858n4
Erskine, John, 21–23, 25n9
Etchells, Frederick, 532, 535n16
Eucken, Rudolf, 266, 271n10
euphuism, 83, 87n5, 733
Euripides, 151, 195–201, 282–83
Everyman Theatre (Hampstead), 362, 373nn7–8. *See also* Macdermott
evolution, theory of, 44, 61–62, 192n15, 474n2, 517–18n6, 767n7, 776n10, 778, 782n3

Faber, Geoffrey, 583n4, 760
Fabre, Jean-Henri, 138, 139n6
Falls, Cyril, 275–276, 276n2
farce, 3, 101, 104n28, 127n5, 154, 158–59, 163n39, 254, 256, 282, 284n2, 342–43, 578, 687
fascism, 430–31, 779n3, 796n2
Fenollosa, Ernest, 149
Fernandez, Ramon, 585–87, 647n55, 806, 834–42, 843
Ferrero, Guglielmo, 795, 796n2
Feuillet, Octave, 49, 52n3
Feydeau, Ernest-Aimé, 49, 52n3
Fichte, Johann Gottlieb, 749, 778
Ficino, Marsilio, 606, 607nn10,12, 626n27
Field, Nathan, 853, 855n5
Fielding, Henry, 304n2
Firbank, Ronald, 365, 368n27
Fitton, Mary, 29, 32n19, 251, 258n26
Fitzgerald, Edward, 65n9
Fitzgerald, F. Scott, 878, 879n6
Flaubert, Gustave, xxiii, 23, 49, 51, 52nn2,4, 53n16, 57, 58n8, 154, 162n19, 176, 179n7, 198, 254, 282, 295, 322n22, 413, 478, 479, 481n11, 489, 519 text n, 523, 527n8, 561, 742
Flecker, James Elroy, 57, 59n9, 211n10
Fletcher, John (dramatist), 115, 117, 120n7, 150, 156–57, 162–63nn32–34, 250–53, 258nn23–24,27, 510n10, 644n23, 803, 852–55
Florio, John, 134, 136n7, 177, 179nn5,8, 385n20, 600–02
de la Fontaine, Jean, 320n6
Fontenelle, Bernard Le Bovier de, 1, 2, 7nn9,14
Forbes-Robertson, Sir Johnston, 342, 346n8
Ford, Ford Madox (Ford Madox Hueffer), 500–02, 772, 775n5
Ford, John, 117, 120n17, 249, 251, 434, 436n8, 803
Fortunatus, 709, 721n25, 800n9
Fournier, Henri-Alban (Alain-), 38n18, 53n9, 557n17, 585–86, 587n3
France, Anatole, 202–03, 210n2, 406, 409n3, 493, 517, 577,
Francis, Sir Philip, 868, 869n2
Frazer, Sir James, xviii, xxvii, 96n2, 200n22, 298n2, 480n9, 490–92, 513–15, 517–18, 536, 538n4, 540, 542, 544n7, 545n19, 577, 579n7, 666n31
Freud, Sigmund, 138, 492, 515, 577, 585, 635, 666n28
Fromentin, Eugène, 52, 53n17
Frost, Robert, 397, 590
Fry, Roger, xxxi, 76n3, 131n9, 223n2

Galsworthy, John, 282, 285n15, 504, 510n8
Gamble, F. W., 540–42, 544n10
Garibaldi, Giuseppe, 35, 38n12, 430n2
Garrod, Heathcote William, 409, 529, 533
Gaudier-Brzeska, Henri, 130, 131n8
Gautier, Théophile, 1, 6n2, 7n13, 8n19, 17, 145n10, 216, 310, 313, 743
George, David Lloyd, 64n3, 334, 338–39n10, 339n16, 461, 557n18
Georgian poetry (Georgianism), xviii, xxii, 16–17, 19nn1–2, 129, 224nn18, 307, 330, 332n22, 339nn13,15, 366n5, 487n9, 590n2; anthologies of, 59n9, 335–36, 339n14

Gibbon, Edward, 13, 28, 31n13, 73, 76n5, 139n2, 177, 324–25, 331nn4,6, 364, 368n22, 424, 448
Gilbert, W. S., 342, 346n10
Gillen, Francis James, 138, 139nn2,8, 517–18n6, 581, 583n3
Gilson, Étienne, 633, 645n30, 653, 664n17, 870–73
Gissing, George, 62, 64n6
Gladstone, William, 364, 368n21
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 73, 78–82, 122, 126n3, 198, 200n23, 281–82, 306, 466, 555, 613, 625n13, 645n34
Golding, Arthur, 177, 180n13, 800n5
Goldsmith, Oliver, 8n26, 78, 81n7, 350, 380, 676, 729
Goossens, Eugene, 369, 372n3
Gosse, Edmund, xviii, 14–15n10, 121n28, 130–31n2, 270n4, 296, 299n9, 334, 344, 348n27, 406, 442, 444n8, 531, 643n18, 644n23, 690, 700n12, 701n18, 743, 755–56n11
Gourmont, Rémy de, xviii, 145n10, 204, 210nn7,9, 254, 260–61, 269, 270n2, 271n8, 272n16, 287, 291, 292, 327, 331n11, 465, 468n27, 489, 519 text n, 623, 648, 650, 655, 662n7
Gozzoli, Benozzo, 650, 662n5
Granada, Luis de, 637, 646n44
Grant, Ulysses S., 42, 46n7
Graves, George, 303, 305n11, 343
Graves, Robert, 38n3, 766n2
Gray, Thomas, 78, 81n7, 188, 313, 318, 350, 378, 380, 715, 736, 863
Green, Russell, 129, 130n2
Greene, Robert, 103n8, 474n6
Gresham, Sir Thomas, 818, 827n4
Greuze, Jean-Baptiste, 2, 7n13
Greville, Fulke, 15n14, 630, 733, 740n27, 864, 866n22
Grierson, Herbert, 375, 383–84, 599n8, 611, 621, 623–24, 637, 658, 667n32, 672, 675, 680, 690, 700–04, 727, 760–61 text n
Grosart, Alexander B., 862, 865–66
Grotius, Hugo, 848–50, 871
Guarini, Giovanni Battista, 715, 718, 723n46
Guinizelli (or Guinicelli), Guido, 211n12, 380, 618, 626nn31–32, 655
Guitry, Sacha, 282–83, 285n16, 433, 436nn5–6, 506, 510n13
de Góngora y Argote, Luis, 717–18, 724nn52–53, 843, 845

H. D. (Hilda Doolittle), 198, 201n26, 532, 534n14, 721n20
Hakluyt, Richard, 27, 31n8, 168
Hale, Robert, 303, 305n11, 343
Hall, Bishop Joseph, 152, 161n13, 680, 700n12, 790
Hallam, Henry, 863, 866n18
Hardy, Thomas, 49, 62, 92, 129, 173, 175n11, 284n10, 310, 370–71, 400, 483, 493, 502n3, 517, 742
Harrington, James, 848–50
Harris, Frank, 641, 647n57
Harris, J. Rendel, 138, 139n7, 491, 514, 517–18n6
Harrison, Jane Ellen, 138–39, 197, 198, 200n21, 474n8, 491, 514, 517–18n6, 526
Hartland, Edwin Sidney, 491, 514, 517–18n6
Hartley, David, 529, 533n5
Hartmann, Eduard von, 743, 745–46, 750, 757n18
Hauvette, Henri, 229, 234n11
Hawthorne, Nathaniel, 22–25, 49, 59n59, 402, 485, 557n15, 755n4
Haydon, Benjamin Robert, 78, 82n12
Hazlitt, William, xxiii, 58n2, 78, 115, 119n4, 120n7, 353–54, 360n18, 445n2, 852, 855n3
Hearnshaw, F. J. C., 848–50
Hecht, Ben, 432, 438
Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich, 238, 239n4, 266, 273, 274n2, 539, 543n5, 749
Heine, Heinrich, 442
Hemingway, Ernest, 878, 879n6
Henley, W. E., 27, 31nn4,9, 179n5, 407, 409n9
Heraclitus, 227, 234
Herbart, Johann Friedrich, 65n11, 272n19
Herbert, Edward, 1st Baron of Cherbury, 375, 377, 379–80, 383, 383n3, 554, 655, 660, 680
Herbert, George, 375, 378, 383, 444n7, 612, 622, 624n7, 708, 718, 721n21, 734–35, 818
Herder, Johann Gottfried von, 78, 81n10
heresy (heretics), xxvi, 1, 73, 76n5, 137, 296, 461, 531, 631, 633, 658; "The Principles of Modern Heresy" (proposed book), xxvi
Hergesheimer, Joseph, 812–13, 815n2
Herodas (Herondas), 176, 179
Hesse, Herman, xxviii, 555, 557n17, 558n21, 645n34
Hewett, Edgar Lee, 491, 514, 581, 583n3
Heywood, Jasper, 630, 643n16, 856
Heywood, John, 630, 643n15, 857–59
Heywood, Thomas, 179, 194n1, 505, 510n12
historical fiction, 771–76. *See also* Savonarola
historical sense, xvi, 106, 112n4, 141
Hobbes, Thomas, 133–34, 177, 179–80n9, 424–26, 448–50, 609, 623, 627n44, 726, 737, 738n3, 848–51
Hodges, Nathaniel, 802, 804n6

Hogarth, William, 344, 347n23, 427, 451, 700n4
Hogarth Press, xv, xxxii, 300–01, 320n1, 359n1, 383n1, 532, 534n15, 546, 563; essay series, xxxi, 546n1
Holland, Philemon, 177, 180n11
Holloway, Baliol, 435, 437n11, 524, 527n12, 876, 878
Holloway, Emory, 22, 25n8, 876–78
Homer, 39n25, 106–07, 187, 198, 311, 408, 410n14, 616, 626n25, 639–40, 647n50, 649
Hood, Christobel, 797–800
Hooker, Richard, 168, 169n9, 623, 627n45, 629, 642n4, 751, 758n31, 778, 818–19, 827nn9–10, 848
Hudson, Stephen (Sydney Schiff), 428, 452, 454n19, 558n21
Hugh of St. Victor, 652, 663n12
Hugo, Victor, 49, 263, 878
Hulme, T. E., xxx, 10, 14n3, 202, 210n3, 465, 468n26, 521, 526nn2,4, 548–49, 556n2, 558n22, 636, 646n40, 684n21, 765, 766n2
humanism, 134, 469, 609, 819
humanitarianism, 2, 344, 509, 511n24, 531, 541, 544n17
Hume, David, 93, 96n3, 281, 540
Hunt, J. H. Leigh, 78–80, 82n12
Husserl, Edmund, 128n15, 676, 684n21
Huxley, Aldous, 17, 20n10, 130, 130–31n2, 209n1, 307n7, 337, 339n20, 445n2, 533–34n6
Huxley, Thomas Henry, 61, 542
Huysmans, Joris-Karl, 660, 668nn38–39, 742–43, 755n3, 825, 829n35

Ibsen, Henri, 175n9, 282, 284–85n10, 342, 426, 450, 475n10, 509n6, 773
idealism (philosophical), 239n4, 519n13, 543n5, 839
Ignatius of Loyola, 632, 637, 644n28, 646n44, 651, 654, 665n22, 778, 821, 828n18
imitation, literary, 66, 118, 187, 246, 282, 854; of life, 282, 473, 504–05, 742
Imperialism, 27–28, 30–31, 33, 38n14
impersonality, xvii, 1, 108–09, 112, 138, 184, 190, 214, 217, 288, 319, 343, 434, 506, 563, 652, 764, 793n5
influence (literary), 20n10, 61–62, 72, 77–79, 97–99, 216–18, 271n6, 335, 476, 516–17, 548–49, 563, 600–02, 619–20, 787, 843, 845; and borrowing, 67, 94, 548–49, 245; of the Church, 818; foreign, xvii, 93–94, 450; *vs.* resemblance, 641; in *Ulysses*, 426, 450
Inge, William Ralph, 523–24, 527n10
inner voice, xxxi, 461–63
interpretation, 173, 229, 263, 464–65, 471–74, 553, 667n35, 675, 771–72, 775nn3,4; in performance, 171–73, 283, 473, 506–07; relation to facts, 122–23, 465, 471, 474n3, 518n8; and translation, 137, 139, 144
Irving, Sir Henry, 342, 346n8

Jackson, Andrew, 876, 878n3
James, Henry, xxvii, 23, 45, 47n20, 49, 57, 58–59n8, 69, 176, 210n5, 400, 404, 411–12, 426, 450, 478, 479, 481n11, 483, 486, 490–91, 499n5, 502n3, 513–14, 517n3,4, 557n15, 685n39, 693, 702n32, 755n4, 836, 843, 845, 879n6
James, William, 65n11, 220, 223n20, 233, 236n28, 710, 722n28, 749
James I (King of England), 168, 612, 643n17, 644n25, 751, 821, 825, 826n2, 827n4, 848, 860
Janet, Pierre, 197, 200n19,
Jeans, Isabel, 524, 527n12
Jeffrey, Lord Francis, 531, 534n9
Jespersen, Otto, 204, 210n8, 812, 816n8
Jesuits, xxxiv, 596–97, 598n1, 629, 632, 635, 640, 693, 706, 710, 719n6, 797, 799, 826, 856
Joachim, Harold, 543nn1,4, 828n20
Joan of Arc (Jeanne d'Arc), 275, 276n5, 460, 466–67n6, 781, 782n2
John of the Cross, Saint, 617, 637, 651, 654, 664–65n18, 699, 736, 818
Johnson, Lionel, 216, 223n12, 223–24n12, 395, 398n4, 487nn4,8, 706
Johnson, Samuel, 163, 297, 299n12, 314, 322nn24,33, 323n40, 350, 376–80, 383–84, 404, 424, 448, 486, 546, 594–95, 612–13, 623, 624nn8,10, 625n15, 676–77, 727–31, 736, 739nn9,14,20, 741n36, 748, 791, 793n3
Joinville, Jean de, 177, 180n10
Jones, Henry Arthur, 506, 510–11n16
Jones, Inigo, 160, 164n49
Jonson, Ben, xvii, xix, xxiii, 38–39n20, 83, 85, 87nn6–7, 88nn15–17, 117–18, 120–21, 149n3, 150–64, 194n1, 253–54, 256, 259n34, 261n3, 303, 305n13, 309, 313, 317, 320n8, 322n21, 340n25, 341–42, 346n2, 350, 354, 359, 375, 379, 404, 445, 486, 510n10, 527–28n18, 535n22, 606, 612, 624n10, 630–31, 643n19, 644nn22–23, 676, 688, 691–92, 701nn22,30, 798, 800n4, 818
Joyce, James, 75, 184, 365, 390, 392–93, 403–04, 414n5, 426, 444n10, 448, 521, 534n14, 555, 691, 701n23, 721n20, 835; and *Ulysses*, 38n4, 330, 332n23, 368n26, 369, 397, 398nn8,9,

411, 413n2, 442, 450, 453n11, 476–81, 486, 488nn14,16, 532, 534nn13
Junius, Francis, 859n11, 868–69
Juvenal, 687–88, 690, 700n6, 790–93

Kahn, Gustave, 559, 564n3
Kant, Immanuel, 65n11, 635, 645n32, 676, 741, 743, 749, 771
Keats, John, xxiii, xxxiii, 78–79, 82n13, 110, 119, 213, 223n3, 254, 279, 310, 312, 319, 335, 345, 348n29, 350, 359n4, 381, 385n26
Ker, W. P., 409n2, 465, 468n28, 524, 527n11, 533n2, 603, 607n2
King, Henry (bishop and poet), 327, 331n13, 375, 377, 381, 383, 384nn14–15, 456, 546, 624nn4,9, 681–83, 685n34, 715
Kipling, Rudyard, xvii, 33–40, 404, 486, 830–31, 832nn1–3
Kittredge, George Lyman, 807, 810n3
Kleen, Tyra de, 581, 583n1
de Kock, Charles Paul, 49, 52n2
Kotzebue, August von, 77, 80
Kyd, Thomas, 84–85, 88n15, 89–90, 97, 100, 104n24, 123, 127n7, 253, 504, 510n9, 866n22

Laforgue, Jules, xxxvii, 18, 20nn10–11, 126, 128n19, 216–17, 264, 309, 313, 323n43, 337, 382, 385n28, 489, 519 text n, 559, 619–20, 661, 669, 676, 684n17, 743–51, 755–57
La Harpe, Jean-François de, 57, 59n12
Lamartine, Alphonse de, 275, 276n4
Lamb, Charles, 54, 58n3, 78, 80n2, 87n7, 115, 120n6, 278–79, 284n3, 328, 346n7, 407, 503, 509nn2–5, 525, 527n14, 531, 556n1
Landor, Walter Savage, 79, 228–31, 233–36, 310, 424, 448, 561, 565n18, 662n4
Langland, William, 687, 700nn5–6, 790
Larbaud, Valery, xxviii, 403, 476, 480nn3–4, 486, 488n14, 596, 598n3
Larroumet, Gustave, 1, 6n3, 7nn6–8, 8n20
Lasserre, Pierre, 275, 276n7, 521, 526n4
Latimer, Hugh, 165–67, 169nn3,6, 677, 684n22, 819
Laud, William, 597, 598n5, 706–07, 719n9, 751, 778, 820–21, 832–33
Lawrence, D. H., 413, 415nn12–13, 428, 448, 451–52, 454n20, 651, 663n10
Legouis, Émile, 852, 855nn1,4
Levey, Ethel, 337, 340n24, 343, 347n16
Lévy-Bruhl, Lucien, 138, 139n7, 197, 200n21, 491, 514, 536, 538n4, 775n4
Lewis, Wyndham, 68, 70n5, 130–31n2, 131n9, 222–23n1, 276nn5–6, 304n1, 307n1, 344, 347n22, 392–93, 397, 404, 427–28, 451, 454nn16–17, 478–79, 480nn7,10, 488n16, 526n5, 532, 534n14, 787, 789n8, 850–51n7
Liberalism, 61, 320n9, 408, 542, 545nn21,23
Lincoln, Abraham, 41, 47n14, 222
Lindsay, Vachel, 334–35, 338nn8–9, 396, 403, 485, 849, 850
Li Po, 142, 145n8
Lloyd, Marie, xxix, 303, 305n11, 337, 340n24, 342–43, 347n13, 397, 418–23, 524, 570n8
Locke, John, 133, 134, 189, 192n10, 404, 426, 450, 486, 540, 641
London Library, xxxiv, 147–48
The London Mercury, xviii, 211n10, 274n1, 331n8, 339n15, 344, 348nn26,27, 395, 397, 414n5. *See also* Georgian poetry; Squire
Lopokova, Lydia, 363, 367n12, 437n13, 543, 545nn27–28, 570n2
Lotinga, Ernie, 337, 340n24
Lowell, Amy, xx, xxii, 396–97
Lucretius, 189, 192n13, 227–28, 234nn4–8, 311, 321n12, 355–56, 361n27, 562–63, 612–14, 751, 845, 846
Lupino, Henry (Lupino Lane), 303, 305n11, 343
Luther, Martin, 192n10, 629, 632, 642nn7–8, 694
Lutheranism, 134, 631, 706, 742, 857
Lyly, John, 83, 87n5, 116, 120n10, 253, 733
Lynd, Robert Wilson, xx, xxxix, 54–59, 185n6, 186n13, 339n17, 341, 344, 348n27, 362, 366n5
lyric, 99, 310, 604, 614, 676–77, 792

Macaulay, Thomas Babington, 58, 364, 368n22, 424–25, 448
Macdermott, Norman, 366–67n11, 370, 373n7
Macdonald, Hugh, 532, 535n16
Mach, Ernst, 44, 46n10
Machiavelli, Niccolò, 132, 135n2, 606, 631
Mackail, J. W., 144, 146n14, 284n8, 407, 410n12, 722n29, 779n4, 795, 796n2
Mackenzie, Compton, 51, 53n2, 411–12, 414n3
Maeterlinck, Maurice, 74, 76n8, 86, 90 text n1, 91 text n2, 281, 284–85n10
Magnus, Albertus, 872, 873n8
Maimonides, 637, 646n41
Malherbe, François de, 561, 564nn12–13
Mallarmé, Stéphane, xxvi, xxxvii, 76n8, 216–18, 224n17, 260, 329, 332n21, 354, 560–61, 564n15, 743, 843–47
Mannhardt, Wilhelm, 200n18, 491, 514, 517–18n6
Manning, Frederic, 330n1, 426, 450, 453n10, 576, 579n4, 841n7

Mantegna, Andrea, 139, 140n11
Marino, Giambattista, 596, 598n2, 612, 624n10, 683, 685n24, 707, 709, 713–718, 723nn43–45, 724nn52–53, 728, 843, 845
marionettes, 434, 507, 511n17. *See also* puppet plays
Marivaux, Pierre de, xvi–xvii, 1–9, 58n8, 158, 163n39, 254, 259n33, 472, 773
Marlowe, Christopher, xvi, xxiii, 84, 87n7, 89–90, 97–104, 118, 120n10, 155–59, 163n40, 178, 253–56, 259, 281, 309, 350, 379, 535n21, 631, 644n22, 733, 854, 874, 875n6
"Marprelate, Martin," 13, 15n14, 177, 683n3; tracts, 427, 451, 454n15, 670
Martial, 143, 145n10, 644n22
Martin, L. C., 603–05, 607nn6,7,9, 721n26
Marvell, Andrew, xxi, xxiii, 248, 309–23, 345, 375, 378, 442, 455–57, 680–81, 683, 685n31,33–34, 713, 715, 717–18, 724nn54–56, 727, 734–35, 746, 757nn24–25
Masefield, John, 57, 59n9, 69n12, 71n12, 487n10
Massine, Léonide, lii, 363, 367, 372, 434, 435, 436, 437, 473, 510, 543, 545, 570
Massinger, Philip, 115–16, 120nn8–9,17, 244–59, 260–61, 304n2, 852–55, 866n22
Massis, Henri, 778, 780n5, 836–37
Masters, Edgar Lee, 338n8, 396, 403, 485
Maupassant, Guy de, 49, 52n4
Maurras, Charles, xxvi, xxx, 95, 96n8, 275–77, 489, 519–20 text n, 521, 526n4, 564n14, 590n3, 765, 766n2. *See also* Action Français
Mazzini, Giuseppe, 35, 38n12
medieval philosophy, 605–06, 628–47 passim, 648–68 passim, 870–73. *See also* Aquinas; Gilson; scholasticism; Thomism; de Wulf
Medwall, Henry, 856–59
Meierhold, Vsévolöd, 787, 788–89n6
Meinong, Alexius von, 88n18, 562, 565n21, 647n51
Melanchthon, Philip, 629, 642n7
Mencken, H. L., 333, 338n2, 814, 816n6, 876
Mercier, Désiré-Joseph, 871, 873n4
Meredith, George, 57, 61–63, 64n2, 65n8, 178, 180n16, 292, 293n7, 425, 449, 737, 746, 791, 793n5, 836–37, 841nn8–9
Merrill, Stuart, 560, 564n7
metaphysical poetry, xxii, xxxiv–xxxv, xxxvii, 375–85, 386–87, 597–98, 606, 609–761 (passim, The Clark Lectures), 798, 843–44, 845–46, 863–64; Johnson on, 297, 322
metaphysics, 122, 300, 365, 515–16, 519n12, 521, 539–40, 565, 751, 818; in literature, 562, 624n8, 743, 750; *vs.* psychology, 597, 613, 621, 677, 839. *See also* Aristotle; Bradley
Middleton, Thomas, 114, 156, 247–49, 251, 253, 258nn17–18,21,25, 376, 503, 509–12, 533, 556n1, 802, 804, 853
Migne, Jacques Paul, 652, 664nn13–14,16
Mill, John Stuart, 467n11, 539, 543n5
Milnes, Richard Monckton, 41, 45, 46n4
Milton, John, xxii, xxxii, 47, 77, 97, 99, 117–18, 160, 163n48, 190, 231, 248–50, 281, 307, 310–11, 317–20, 326–27, 353–56, 358, 380–82, 385n26, 524, 612, 623–24, 736
Mistinguett (Jeanne-Marie Bourgeois), 397, 398n12
Molière, 2–3, 5, 7n10, 8nn20–24, 9n30, 153–54, 158–59, 162n21, 163n39, 254, 259n33, 339n17, 474n4
Monarchism, 96n8, 461, 877–78
Monck, Nugent, 786, 788n3
Money, Leo George Chiozza, 170, 174n2, 341n7
Monro, Harold, 19n1, 209n1, 210n9, 330n1, 334–40
Monroe, Harriet, 131n6
Montaigne, Michel de, 73, 126, 128n20, 133–36, 168, 177, 179nn8–9, 187, 242, 245, 424, 448, 587n5, 600–02, 631, 810n1
Moore, Marianne, 404, 488n16, 495–99, 532, 534n14, 577–78, 579n8
Moore, T. Sturge, 406, 409n6
Moore, Thomas, 22, 25n7, 77, 79, 81n5
More, Paul Elmer, 179, 286–90, 292, 292n6, 867n24,
More, Sir Thomas, 629–30, 643n12, 856–59, 871
Moréas, Jean, 561, 564n14
Morris, Margaret, 222–23n1, 372, 373n14, 582, 584n7
Morris, William, xxiii, 16, 19n5, 74, 196–97, 239n1, 315–17, 408, 410n12–13, 453n9
Mozart, George (David John Gillings), 303, 305n11, 337, 421n5
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, 78, 82n12, 173, 175n10, 421
Müller, Herrmann, 632, 644n29, 654
Müller, Max, 200n18
Murray, Gilbert, xviii, 195–201, 282, 285n17, 473, 474–75n8, 491, 517–18n6, 576, 579nn3–4
Murry, John Middleton, xv–xvi, xx–xxi, xxix–xxxi, xxxiii, xxxvi, 30n1, 31n7, 120n19, 147–48n1, 240–43, 258n23, 260n1, 344, 347n25, 412, 414n8, 427, 443n1, 447n2, 451, 454n14, 460–62, 467, 526n3, 531, 534n10, 549, 556n5, 602, 632, 644n26, 651, 664–65n18, 766n6, 838, 840n2, 874–75

music halls, xxiv, xxix, 283, 302–05, 337, 340n24, 342–47, 397, 398n12, 418–423, 433, 436n4, 437nn12–13, 545n28, 567, 582. *See also* Lloyd; revue
de Musset, Alfred, 3, 8n19, 273, 274n3, 742
Mussolini, Benito, 430n2, 574, 778, 779n3
mysticism, 12–3, 23, 50–52, 53n15, 112, 134, 168, 197, 233, 236nn25, 28, 266, 288, 527n10, 550, 553–54, 596–97, 599n9, 606–07, 617, 627n46, 628, 632–34, 637, 646nn43,44, 651–54, 663n10, 665n19, 669, 720n16, 736, 822, 826, 841n7, 871. *See also* Dante; Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite; Eckhart; John of the Cross; Richard of St. Victor; Teresa of Ávila; Underhill
mythical method, xxxii, 479, 793n5

Nashe, Thomas, 13, 15n14, 83, 103n8, 177, 211n11, 427, 451, 801
The Nation, 344, 347n24, 443n1, 590n1, 837
The Nation and the Athenaeum, 347n24, 443n1
Native American literature, 137–40
Neoplatonism, 133–34, 135n3, 607nn10,11, 617, 626n27, 629–30, 643nn9,13,872. *See also* Nicolas of Cusa; Pico della Mirandola; Plotinus
Neri, St. Philip, 637, 646n44, 698, 703n54
Nerval, Gérard de, 560, 695, 703nn42,44
Nesbitt, Cathleen, 171, 174n4, 194n5
The New Criterion. See *The Criterion*
Newman, John Henry, 128n15, 325, 327, 331n5, 424–26, 448–50, 453nn8,11, 539, 542, 543n3, 545n23, 568, 641, 705–06, 778, 825–26, 829n33, 836–37, 841n7
The New Republic, 367n19, 396, 398n6
Newton, Sir Isaac, 134, 372, 702n35
Nichols, Robert, 337, 339n19
Nicolas of Cusa, 629, 643n9, 871
Nietzsche, Friedrich, 192n17, 635, 645n34, 772, 836
Nijinsky, Vaslav, 363, 367n14, 373n5
Nodier, Charles, 52, 53n17
North, Thomas, 27–28, 31nn3,8,10–11, 113n9, 601
Nouvelle Revue français, xxvi–xxvii, xxxvii, 367n11, 452n1, 486n1, 489, 519 text n1, 531, 578, 585–87
the novel, 1, 6, 13, 48–53, 61–62, 295, 330, 411–15, 452, 469, 513–14, 751, 808, 834–36, 845; American, 812, 878, 879n6; French, history of, 48–53; and *Ulysses*, 478–79. *See also* Conrad; Dosteovski; H. James; Sinclair

objective correlative (or objective equivalent), xiii, xvi, xvii, 125, 128n15, 220
occult, the (occultists), 50, 134, 369, 613–14, 625n15, 629, 755n3
Oesterley, W. O. E., 471, 473, 474n1
Oldham, John, 350, 358, 359n2, 522, 676, 688, 724n57, 791, 793n3
O'Neill, Eugene, 783–84
opera, 11, 14n8, 173, 175n10, 282, 342, 346n10, 362
Oppé, A. P., 581, 583n1
Otway, Thomas, 194n1, 253, 259n32, 535n22
Ourliac, Édouard, 49, 52n3
Ovid, 177, 180n14, 278, 284n2, 313, 356, 644n22, 651, 690, 701nn19–20,24, 758n32, 795–96, 809, 810n7
Oxenham, John (W. A. Dunkerley), 33, 37n2

painting, 70n5, 102, 193, 218, 337, 340n27, 347n22
Palmerston, Viscount, 41, 46n4
Pankhurst, Emmeline, 543, 545n26
Parker, Matthew, 818, 827n4
Parmenides, 227, 234n3
Pascal, Blaise, 2, 133, 266, 271n9
Pater, Walter, xxii–xxiii, xxvi, 75, 76n6, 113n10, 119, 122, 136n9, 198, 200–01n23, 203, 263, 271n5, 328, 332n15, 353, 365, 404, 425–27, 449–51, 453nn6–7,9,11, 486, 539, 543n3, 549, 556n5, 641, 650, 662n7, 706, 720n13, 743
Patmore, Coventry, 655, 666n26
Pavlova, Anna, 363, 367n14
Peacock, Thomas Love, 78, 792, 794n10
Pearson, Karl, 44, 46n10
Peele, George, 99, 104n14, 280
Perry, W. J., 536–38
Persius, 687–89, 690, 700nn6–8,12, 790, 793n1
Petrarch (Francesco Petrarca), 233, 234n9, 236n29, 726, 728
Petronius, 163n38, 176, 179n2, 180n17, 198, 298n1, 644n22, 652
Philippe, Charles-Louis, 292, 293n7
Phillips, David Graham, 335, 339n12
Phillips, Edward, 350, 359n2
philosophical poetry, xxii, xxxiv, 226–37 passim, 613–18, 676–77, 843–46, 861
Phoenix Society, xxiv, 170–75, 193–94, 302, 304n2, 337, 340n25, 341–42, 346nn2,3,6,7, 367n16, 434, 436n8, 437n11, 505, 510n10, 524–25, 527nn12–13, 532–33, 535nn17–19,22, 785–88
Picasso, Pablo, 225n23, 337, 340n27, 369
Pico della Mirandola, 626n27, 629, 643nn9,12, 872

Pierce, Frederick, 77–81
Pinero, Arthur Wing, 173, 174n4, 175n12, 508, 512n24, 773, 776n11
Pirandello, Luigi, 783, 783–84n1
Pistoia, Cino da, 380, 618, 626n31, 655
Plato, 10, 14n2, 76n6, 132–34, 280–81, 284n9, 373n11, 413, 617, 626n27, 658, 666n30
Platonism, 133–34, 344, 659–60, 662n7, 872
Plautus, 5, 472, 474n4
Plotinus, 132, 134, 659, 667n36, 828n32
Plutarch, 28, 31nn3,8,11–12, 108, 113n9, 180n11, 225n24, 602n4, 606, 607n12
Poe, Edgar Allan, 22–25, 74, 306, 316, 322n33, 324–25, 328–29, 331n7, 332n20, 350, 359n3, 377, 384n15, 392, 402, 485, 743, 801, 804n2, 843–47
poetic drama, xxxvi, 83–91, 170–75, 221–22, 240–43, 278–85, 341–42, 433–37, 503, 509n1, 773–74. *See also* Phoenix Society
Poincaré, Jules Henri, 44, 47n12
Polack, William, 260–61
Pollard, Alfred W., 810n5, 874, 875n4
Pomponazzi, Pietro, 132–33, 135n3
Pope, Alexander, xxii, 78–79, 279, 284n4, 310, 326, 350, 353–54, 359n4, 360nn18–20, 361n22, 408, 456, 524, 546, 593, 614, 641, 647n58, 676, 719nn6,10, 724n58, 725–26, 729, 736–37, 749, 791–92, 793nn2,8, 862
Porphyry of Tyre, 659, 667n36
Pound, Ezra, xiv, xvii–xviii, xxii, xxv, xxvii–xxviii, xxxii, xxxvi, 9n34, 20n7, 47n20, 76n2, 96n4, 112n4, 113n7, 121n28, 128n19, 129, 131nn2, 141–46, 149, 174n1, 198, 201nn27–28, 210nn3,7, 211n12, 218, 224n15, 236nn25,29, 259n35, 272n16, 276n6, 284n1, 292n2, 297n1, 337, 396–97, 398nn5,7,9, 416nn2–3, 467n18, 468n26, 479, 480n1, 481n11, 501n1, 532, 534n14, 584n7, 662n7, 666n25, 766n3
Poussin, Nicolas, 2, 7n13
Praed, Winthrop Mackworth, 792, 794n10
Praz, Mario, xxxiv–xxxv, 596–99, 618, 623, 626n32, 627n36, 634, 642n1, 646n44, 666n28, 667n35, 675, 684n13, 685nn24,37, 708, 710, 715, 718n1, 722n29, 723nn46–47, 759–61, 798, 800nn6–7, 866n17
Prior, Matthew, 375, 384n5, 682, 792
Propertius, Sextus, 142–44, 145n8, 146nn14–15, 149n3, 263, 278, 284n2, 313, 690, 701n19
prose poetry, 17–18, 20n11, 68, 324–32, 564n7
Proust, Marcel, 427, 450, 453n12, 585, 586, 587n5, 641, 647n55, 749, 835–36
Provençal poetry, xxxiv, 143, 145nn6,9, 554, 648–51, 655, 662nn1,3, 669, 676
psychoanalysis, 69, 204, 412, 414n5, 428, 452, 553, 577. *See also* Freud; Sinclair
psychology, 65n11, 107, 127n6, 200nn18–19, 224n20, 270, 300, 382, 420, 442, 461, 479, 516, 553, 640, 720n16, 725, 751, 776, 822, 843, 845; *vs.* metaphysics, ontology, 597, 621, 634–37, 640–41, 653, 667, 836–39; social, 197–98, 200n22
Punch, 101, 104n28, 302, 305n7, 343, 347n20, 792, 794n10
puppet plays, 363, 367nn17,18. *See also* marionettes
Puritanism, 21, 23, 43, 190, 251, 310–11, 313, 320nn7–8, 467n16, 803, 821
Putnam, Ruth, 22, 24n4

Quartermaine, Leon, 525, 527n15
Quinn, John, xiv–xvii, 46n8, 52n7, 53n16, 301n1, 347n22, 368n26, 438n1
Quintilian, 290n8, 577, 579n6

Racine, Jean, 2, 5, 9nn36–37, 217, 357, 367n20, 382, 474, 638, 639, 646n47, 787
Radcliffe, Ann, 50, 77, 78, 81n5
Ralegh (or Raleigh), Walter, 12–13, 14n10, 15n16, 168, 178, 332n24
Raleigh, Walter Alexander (professor), 406, 409nn1–2, 410n11
Ramsay, Mary Paton, xxxiv, 597, 598n1, 599n8, 622, 627n36, 628–30, 636–37, 642nn1,3, 703n53
Rand, Edward Kennard, 795–96
Rastell, Elizabeth, 643n11
Rastell, John, 643nn14–15, 857–59
Rastelli, Enrico, 473, 475n10, 582, 584n6
Read, Herbert, xxviii, xxxi, xxxv, 6n1, 66, 68–70, 130, 131n7, 337, 526n2, 625n17, 626n24, 627n46, 642n4, 646n49, 647n55, 684n21, 702n32, 759–61, 806, 834–42, 850n7
Reed, A.W., 856–59, 868–69
Reid, Thomas, 93, 96n3
Relph, Harry (Little Tich), 303, 305n11, 337, 342–43, 419, 421nn5,12
Renan, Ernest, 134, 426, 450, 453n10, 527n8, 577
Repplier, Agnes, 334, 338n7
Restoration drama, xxiv, 156, 174nn2,3, 176, 194n1, 253–54, 256, 341–42, 527n12, 532–33, 535nn20–21, 786–87, 788n1
revue, xxiv, 342–43, 346n11, 347nn15–16, 398n12, 419, 435, 436n10, 437n13, 570n2, 854. *See also* music halls
rhetoric, 2, 13, 29, 83–91 passim, 98, 152–53, 156, 288, 290n8, 676–77

Ribot, Théodule Armand, 197, 200n19
Richard of St. Victor, 652–54, 663n12, 664nn13–14, 665n21, 666n24, 677
Richards, I. A., xxxii–xxxiii, 223n2, 468n26, 635–36, 645nn35,38, 738n2, 787, 789n9, 841n12
Richmond, Bruce, xx, xxi, xxxvii, 160n1, 547n2, 803n1, 806n1, 810n1, 826n1, 850n1, 865n1
Rimbaud, Arthur, 18, 20n11, 67, 216–17, 224n14, 264, 489, 519 text n, 560, 619, 743, 746–47, 755–56n11, 844, 846
Rivers, W. H. R., 420, 422nn22–23, 570n8, 693n11, 723, 776n11
Rivière, Jacques, xxvi, 404n1, 428n1, 454nn14,19, 531, 534n12, 578–80, 585–88
Roberts, William, 130, 131n9
Robertson, J. M., xvi, xxviii, 38n4, 98–99, 103n10, 104nn14,18,24, 113n9, 122–24, 126–28, 385n20, 408, 410n15, 467n18, 600, 602n2, 769, 770n3, 781–82, 874–75
Robey, George (George Edward Wade), 303, 305n11, 342–43, 347n15, 397, 436n10
Rochefoucauld, 2, 7n11, 8n17, 177, 268, 304n6
Rochester, Earl of (John Wilmot) xxxv, 682, 685n38
Rogers, Samuel, 77–78, 81n5
Rolland, Romain, 606, 608n13
Roman Catholic Church (Church of Rome), 629, 633–34, 644n26, 706, 736, 779n2, 818
romanticism, xxiii, xxx, xxxiv, 11, 26–30, 80, 275–77, 306–07, 460–63, 467n7, 477, 514, 520, 522–23, 526n3, 556n5, 644n26, 676, 834–40. *See also* classicism; Hulme; Murry
Romantic literature, 22, 25n7, 26–27, 77–82, 115, 294, 306, 524, 546, 733–34, 794n9
Root, Robert Kilburn, xxxvii, 807–08, 810–11
Rosenberg, Isaac, 202, 210n3
Rossetti, Christina, 20n13, 375, 384n6, 498, 708, 738n2
Rossetti, Dante Gabriel, 65n9, 119, 191n8, 200n16, 623, 626n31, 627n43, 655, 666n25, 668n41
Rostand, Edmond, 83, 86–91
Rousseau, Jean Jacques, 2, 3, 8n18, 78, 81n10, 306, 540, 632, 637, 641, 647n56, 736, 741n35, 749, 758n30
Routledge, George, 522, 526n5
Rowlandson, Thomas, 343–44, 347n21, 427, 451
Royce, Josiah, 96n2, 200nn18,21, 517n6, 663n10, 775n3
Rubinstein, Arthur, 372
Ruskin, John, xxvi, 328, 404, 424–25, 448–49, 453n8, 486, 641, 706
Russell, Bertrand, 266, 271n9, 274n5, 281, 285n12, 492–93, 516, 519n13, 522–24, 526n9, 527nn7–9, 651, 749, 765, 766n5, 841n12
Russell, John (1st Earl Russell), 41, 46n4
Russian Ballet. *See* Ballets Russes
Rymer, Thomas, 127n5, 511n21

Sackville, Thomas, 117, 120n15
Sainte-Beuve, Charles Augustin, 57, 203–04, 210n4, 269, 271n15, 286–90, 499, 597, 598n5, 705, 718–19n1, 849
Saintsbury, George, xxviii, 9n32, 48–50, 52–53, 331n13, 375, 383n2, 384n4, 386–87, 407, 409n8, 442, 444n9, 546–47n1, 577, 579nn5–6, 603, 607n2, 611, 621–22, 624nn5,9, 658, 667n32, 737, 741n38, 752
Sales, St. François de, 821, 828n18
Sandburg, Carl, 396, 398n7, 403, 485, 876
Santayana, George, 64, 65n10, 128n15, 508, 511n23, 601, 602n5, 613–14, 618, 625n13, 653–54, 665n19, 769, 770n4
Sappho, 198, 614, 616
Sardou, Victorien, 173, 175n12
Satanism, 742, 755n3
satire, xxii, 143, 145n10, 151, 153–54, 159, 259n33, 317, 319, 344, 350–54, 360n8, 496–97, 593–95, 613, 624n8, 686–90, 700nn3–7, 736, 790–94. *See also* Aristophanes; Jonson; Martial; Pound
Savonarola, Girolamo, 771–76
Scheler, Max, 778–79, 780n6
Schiff, Sydney, xxv, xxviii, 58n4, 65n10, 70n5, 140n11, 209n1, 298n3, 416–17n3, 454n19, 558n21. *See also* Hudson; Stephen
Schiller, Friedrich, 78, 81n10, 741
Schleiermacher, Friedrich, 266, 271n11, 772, 775n9
scholasticism, 192n13, 236n26, 635–36, 694, 864, 870–73
Schopenhauer, Arthur, 198, 200–01n23, 238, 239n5, 565n20, 743, 745–46, 749–50, 757n18
Scott, Sir Walter, 26–27, 31n8, 58–59n8, 78, 81n8, 359n4, 772, 775n5
sculpture, 102, 524
Sedgwick, Henry Dwight, 228–30, 233n1, 236–37
Seeger, Alan, 11, 14n7
Seldes, Gilbert, 370, 373n7, 479n1
Seneca, 62, 67, 70n3, 245, 472, 474n4, 508, 606, 607n12, 630–31, 643–44, 687, 700n8, 702n41, 733, 740n27, 774, 776n13, 856, 864, 866n22

sensibility, 250, 380–81, 443, 606, 615, 706, 737, 749, 799, 820; in criticism, 265, 269–70, 291; and erudition, 108, 379; and feeling, 126, 212, 214, 265, 846; and philosophy, 516–17; *vs.* sentimentality, 735
sermon (as form), xvi, 165–69, 266–67, 328, 661, 677, 684n22, 691, 817–29. *See also* Andrewes; Donne; Latimer
Settle, Elkanah, 351, 360n8, 792, 793n2, 805n7
Seward, Anna, 77, 81n4
Seyler, Athene, 524, 527n12
Shadwell, Thomas, 174n2, 351, 360n8, 792, 793n2
Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper, first Earl of, 351, 360n8, 793n6
Shakespeare, William, xvi, xix, xxiii, 34–35, 63, 65n9, 67, 101–02, 107–08, 113n9, 150–51, 170, 172–73, 183, 187–88, 212, 222, 242, 254, 279–80, 309–10, 353–54, 385, 408, 410nn14–15, 448, 471–74, 504, 506–11, 527n14, 533, 605, 614, 625n15, 683n8, 735–36, 768–70, 788n3, 808–10, 854, 874–75; and blank verse, 97–98; characters of, 154–55, 158–59, 162nn24,31, 231, 772; Coleridge on, 210n6, 225, 874n6; Falstaff, 158–59, 163n43, 254, 302, 427, 451; Massinger, parallels with, 244–49; and modern actors, 342; Montaigne's influence on, 126, 128n20, 385n20, 600–02; rhetoric in, 83–86, 89–91, 98; Swinburne on, 116–21; terrifying clairvoyance, 313. Works: *Antony and Cleopatra*, 5, 9n37, 85, 124, 236, 257n15, 258n25, 263–64, 456–57, 672, 683n8, 736, 741n34; *Coriolanus*, 85, 124–25, 768–69; *Hamlet*, xix, 122–28, 145n7, 173, 222; *Henry IV, Part I,* 19n3, 163n43; *Julius Caesar*, 85, 561, 564n11; *King Lear*, 84, 89, 128n21, 472–73, 525, 527nn13–17, 617; *Macbeth*, 74, 125, 76n8, 158, 183, 186n14, 258n28, 280, 472, 508, 511n23, 770n4; *Measure for Measure*, 124, 222, 386, 602; *The Merchant of Venice*, 151, 156; *Othello*, 38n9, 85, 110, 127n5, 128n21, 172, 175n9, 251, 511n21, 601, 783; *Pericles*, 38n4, 170, 533, 768; "The Phoenix and the Turtle," 28, 32n16, 386, 387n2; *Romeo and Juliet*, 86, 90 text n2, 124; sonnets, 29, 125, 263, 280, 441; *The Tempest*, 151, 367n15, 518n9, 601, 722n31; *Timon of Athens*, 85, 533; *Troilus and Cressida*, 225n24, 392, 393n5, 602, 809; *Twelfth Night*, 321n12; *The Winter's Tale*, 186n13, 601
Sharp, Cecil J., 544n16, 581–83,
Shaw, George Bernard, 14n5, 62, 282, 305n8, 362–63, 366nn3,11, 370–74, 400, 404, 483, 486, 493, 517, 533, 539, 542–43, 545n24, 555, 765, 766n3,5, 767n7, 772–73, 775n8, 775–76n10, 781–82, 842n17
Shelley, Percy B. (Bysshe), xxiii, 24, 33, 35, 38nn5,12, 47n13, 64, 78–79, 118, 182, 185n9, 213, 217, 223n3, 241, 253, 279, 284n4, 294, 310, 319, 335, 339n14, 351, 360n6, 381, 385n26, 529, 561, 711–13, 722nn35–37, 723n41, 737, 749, 866n20
Shenstone, William, 736, 741n36
Sherbrooke, Michael, 434, 436n8
Sherman, Stuart P., 21, 397, 398n8,
Shirley, James, 116–17, 120nn10,12,17, 253, 256, 259n33
Sidney, Sir Philip, 13, 15nn12,14, 29, 385n32, 733, 858n3
Silius Italicus, 216, 223n8
simplicity (simplification), in verse, 16–18, 152–54, 187–88, 282, 363, 378, 442, 450, 452, 496–98, 669, 673, 692, 734; of characters, 159, 255–56; and feeling, 34, 51, 111, 155, 231, 675, 687, 735; in performance, 363, 434
Sinclair, May, 412, 414n5, 428, 451–52, 454n18
Sitwell, Edith, 16, 18–19, 19n2, 20n13, 130, 337, 340n21, 535
Sitwell, Osbert, 18, 535
Sitwell, Sachervell, 18, 535
Skelton, John, 593, 595n4, 687, 700nn5–6, 790
Smith, Adam, 676, 684n21
Smith, Charlotte, 77, 81n4
Smith, G. Gregory, 92–96, 103n8, 150, 156–58, 160n1, 161nn7,14, 162n22,24,31, 164 text n2
Smith, Grafton Elliot, Sir, 491, 514, 517–18n6, 536, 538nn2–3,5
Smith, Logan Pearsall, 165–69, 326, 328, 331n8, 623, 684n22, 698, 816n7, 819, 824–25, 827n13
Smith, William Robertson, 198, 200n22, 491, 514, 517–18n6
socialism, 199n3, 500, 529–30, 542, 572, 779
Socrates, 10, 284n9, 373
Sokolova, Lydia, 369, 373n4, 543, 545n29
Somervell, D. C., 568, 570n4
Sophocles, 231, 295, 410n14, 505, 639, 786
Sorel, Agnès, 275, 276n5
Sorel, Georges, xxx, 521, 526nn2,4, 765, 766n2
Southey, Robert, 77–81, 140n9
Southwell, Robert, 797–800
Spencer, Herbert, 772
Spencer, Sir Walter Baldwin, 138, 139nn2,8, 491, 514, 517–18n6, 581, 583n3, 772
Spengler, Oswald, 537, 538n6
Spens, Janet, 603, 605–06, 607nn6,12
Spenser, Edmund, 98–100, 103n10, 104n14, 354, 630, 860, 864

Spingarn, J. E., 805–06
Spinoza, Benedict de, 133, 135, 136n9, 187, 242, 268, 270, 271n14, 272n18, 380, 625n13, 848–49
Squire, J. C., xviii, 57, 59n9, 131n2, 211n10, 302, 304n4, 335, 337, 339n15, 344, 362, 366n5, 531
Stanley, Thomas, 612, 624n9
Stendhal (Marie-Henri Beyle), xvii, 9n4, 14n9, 48–53, 58n7, 75, 176, 179n7, 270, 616, 742, 808
Stephen, Leslie, 244, 250, 255, 257n2, 259nn38–39, 852
Stephens, James, 224n18, 390, 392n2, 393n4
Stern, G. B., 412, 414n5
Stewart, Dugald, 93, 96n3
Stoll, Elmer E., 122, 127nn4,6
Stoll, Oswald, 437n13, 543, 545n28, 570n2
Strachey, Lytton, xv, xxvi, 40, 364–68, 641
Stravinsky, Igor, 225n23, 362–63, 365n1, 369–70, 372nn2,3, 373n5, 436n10, 543, 545n29, 567
Strindberg, August, 55
Suárez, Francisco, 848–50, 871
Sullivan, Sir Arthur Seymore, 342, 346n10
Summers, Montague, 174n3, 194n1, 346n3, 788n1
surrealism, 743, 755nn6,8. *See also* Breton; Cendrars
Surrey (Henry Howard, Earl of), 97, 100, 103n3, 177, 180n12
Swedenborg, Emmanuel, 189, 192n10
Swift, Jonathan, 153, 162n18, 178, 247, 310, 390, 432n3, 477, 480n5, 543–44n6, 546, 594, 595n7, 665–66n23, 673, 687, 715, 726, 748, 830
Swinburne, Algernon C., xix, xxii, 33–35, 38nn6,10,12,14, 41, 46n4, 71n13, 97, 115–21, 150, 161nn2,7, 170, 181–86, 196–97, 199n7, 235n21, 243n3, 244, 252, 257n2, 258n27, 263–65, 270–71n5, 328, 358, 361n35, 386–87, 400, 443, 487n6, 503–04, 551, 711, 713–14, 716, 722n38, 723nn39,40, 735, 737, 740n32, 741n38, 774
Swinley, Ion, 174nn1,6, 194n5, 434–35, 436n8
Swinnerton, Frank, 812, 815n2
Sykes, Henry Dugdale, 512n26
Sykes, Norman, 848, 850n4
Sylvester, Joshua, 732, 740n24
symbolism, 76n8, 264, 559, 564nn7,14. *See also* Moréas; Symons
Symons, Arthur, xviii, xxii, 16, 19n3, 224n17, 262–65, 267, 270n1, 271n5,6, 284–85n10, 346n12, 696, 703n44, 743
Synge, J. M., 75, 76nn1,9, 390, 402, 485

de Tabley, Lord, 531, 534n8
Tailhade, Laurent, 50, 53n10
Taine, Hippolyte, 57, 59n11, 273, 274n3, 532, 535n20
Tassin, Algernon de Vivier, 21, 24n2
Taylor, George Coffin, 600–02, 602nn1–2,4
Taylor, Jeremy, 167, 169n8, 327, 331n10, 818
Taylor, William, 78, 80n2, 81n11
Tennyson, Lord Alfred, 13, 35–37, 97, 100, 130n1, 170, 177, 180n12, 188, 199n9, 273, 274n3, 279, 302, 304n4, 307, 379–81, 424, 443, 448, 668n37, 669, 713, 749, 774, 876–79
Teresa of Ávila, Saint, 599n7, 617, 626n26, 634, 637, 641, 651, 653, 683, 698–99, 703n53, 706–09, 715, 719n5, 720nn14–16
du Terrail, Pierre-Alexis Ponson, 52, 53n17
Thackeray, William Makepeace, 281, 295, 425, 449, 477, 480n5, 687, 700n3
Thayer, Scofield, xxiv, xxviii, 71, 283n1, 338n1, 346n1, 367n19, 397nn1,2
Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier, 362, 367n11, 433
Thomism, xxiv, 236n26, 616, 839, 870–873
Thompson, Francis, 375, 384n6, 487n4, 706, 737, 741n40
Thomson, James, 736, 741n37
Thoreau, Henry David, 22
Thorndike, Agnes Sybil, 195–96, 199n2, 545n24
The Times Literary Supplement, xvi, xx–xxi, xxiv, xxxi, xxxiv, xxxvi–xxxvii, 131n2, 160–61n1, 344, 546, 547n2, 826n1, 834, 838–39
Tourneur, Cyril, 114n23, 117–18, 120n17, 156, 158, 245, 247–49, 258n21, 376, 503, 509, 509n1, 556n1
Townshend, Aurelian, 375, 383, 383n3, 385n33, 546
tradition, xvi, xxii, 67–69, 92, 279, 296, 306, 310, 336, 391–92, 105–14, 778, 450, 458, 559, 567, 778
Traherne, Thomas, 612, 622, 624n9, 718, 760
Trotsky, Leon, 569, 570nn9,11
Troubadour poetry. *See* Provençal poetry
Truc, Gonzague, 623, 627n46, 665n20, 667nn33–34, 850n7
Turgenev, Ivan, 23, 49, 51, 56–57, 58n7, 328, 332n17, 561
Twain, Mark (Samuel Clemens), 352, 360n9, 502n3
Tylor, E. B., 96n2, 197–98, 200n18, 474n3, 491, 514, 517–18n6
Tyndale, William, 36, 39n21
The Tyro, 301n1, 347n22, 392n1, 397, 398n11, 404. *See also* Lewis
Tzara, Tristan, 66, 68–71, 220–21, 224n22, 307n3, 746

Ulysses. *See* Joyce; Larbaud
Underdowne, Thomas, 177, 180n11

Underhill, Evelyn, 51, 53n15
Urquhart, Thomas, 93, 96n5, 176, 179n6

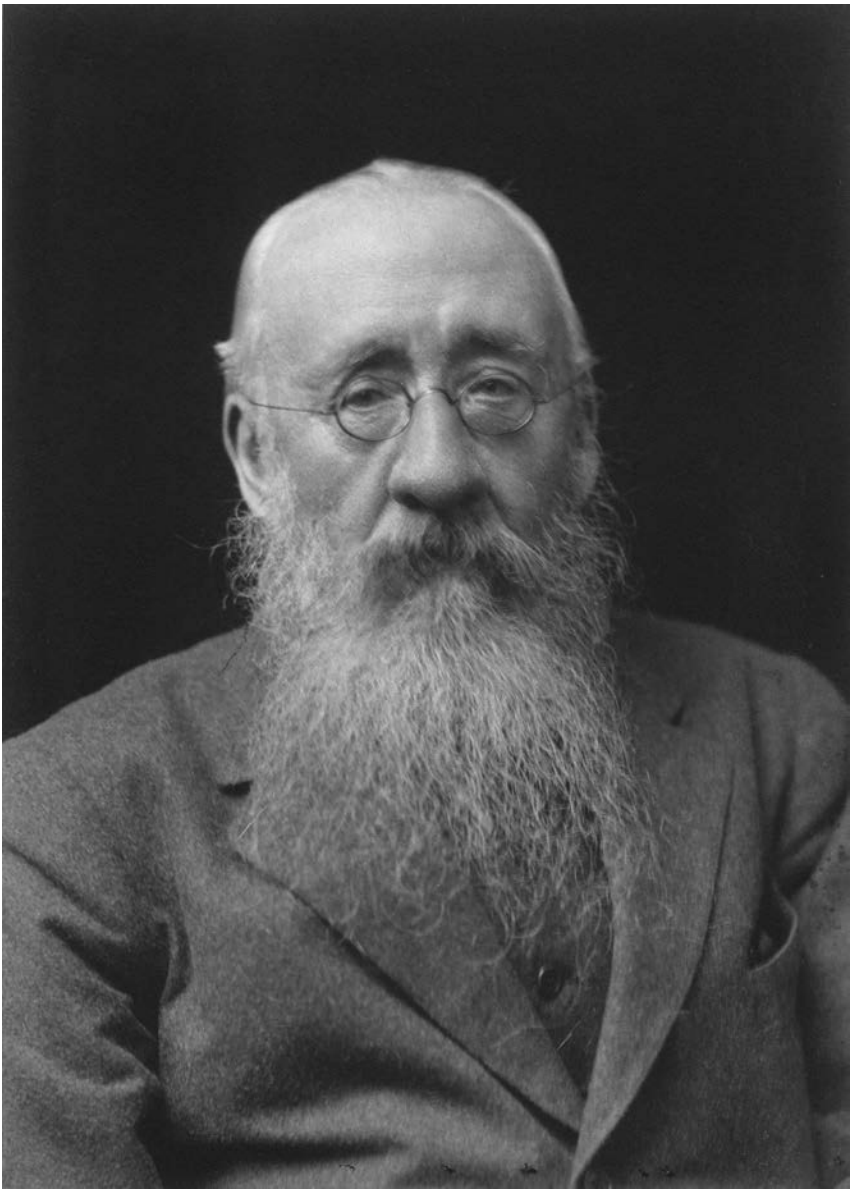
de Valdés, Diego (Jacobus Valdesius), 629, 642n8
Valéry, Paul, xix, xxix, 226, 228, 233, 234n2, 307n2, 497, 499n12, 521, 559–566, 743
Van Doren, Mark, 350, 352, 357, 359–61 passim, 589–91
Vanini, Lucilio, 133, 135n4
Vanity Fair (periodical), xxvii, 404n1, 452n1, 486n1, 488n17, 494n1, 517nn1,2, 519n1, 543n4
Vauvenargues, Marquis de (Luc de Clapiers) 2, 7n11
Verlaine, Paul, 16, 19n3, 264, 560, 746
Vermigli, Peter Martyr, 629, 642n7
verse drama. *See* poetic drama
vers libre, 16, 84, 131n6, 137, 219, 559, 564n3, 876
Victoria (Queen of England), 364, 367n19, 368nn21,23–24
Villiers, George (2nd Duke of Buckingham), 351, 360n8, 535n22
Villon, François, 20n7, 31n14, 55, 214–15, 217, 223n5, 289, 316, 322n32, 353, 360n13, 561
Virgil, 102, 198, 408, 469, 518n7, 590, 625n15, 651, 720n18, 796
Voltaire, 2, 177, 179n9, 307n4, 324, 331n4, 877, 878n5

Wagner, Richard, 745, 757nn18–19
Walker, Hugh, ix, 593–95, 687, 699n2
Wallace, Nellie, 303, 305n11, 342–43, 347n14, 397, 418–19, 421n5, 422n12, 524
Waller, Edmund, 280, 284n8, 321n12, 350, 622–23, 624n10, 676, 724n57
Walpole, Horace (Horatio), 2, 8n15, 9n32, 78, 81n3
Walpole, Hugh, 812, 816n2
Walsingham, Sir Francis, 818, 827n4
Walton, Izaak, 320n4, 444n7, 624n7, 628–29, 642nn2,6
Wanley, Nathaniel, ix, 603–07
Wardle, Mark Kingsley, 559, 563, 563n1, 564n2, 566n24
Watteau, Antoine, 2, 7n13
Webb, Sidney, 61, 569, 571n12
Webster, Daniel, 21, 24n3
Webster, John, 19n6, 84, 89n1, 116–18, 120nn10,13,17, 158, 170–73, 174nn1–2, 193, 194nn1–2, 245, 247–49, 346n7, 503, 508, 509n1, 556n1
Wells, H. G., 62, 295, 299n7, 400, 404, 411, 414n3, 483, 486, 488n15, 539, 726, 765, 766n5
Wendell, Barret, 22, 25n10
Wescott, Glenway, 495–97, 498nn2–3
Weston, Jessie, 491, 514, 517–18n6
Wheeler, Monroe, 495, 498n2
Wheels, 16–20, 307n7, 340n21
Whibley, Charles, xix, 26–27, 30n1, 31nn4,6, 32n24, 96n5, 176–80, 286, 289n2, 332n24, 407, 409n9, 468n27, 768–69, 770n2
Whitgift, John, 818, 827n4
Whitman, Walt, 22–24, 397, 398n8, 402, 485, 876–78, 879n7
Wilcox, Ella Wheeler, 336, 339n18
Wilde, Oscar, xxvi, 13, 198, 201n23, 371, 399–400, 402, 404, 414n7, 425–26, 449–50, 453n9, 482–86, 487nn2,4–6,8, 527n16, 706, 742–43, 755n3
Wilson, Edmund, xxvii, xxxii, 452n1
Wilson, F. P., 801, 803n1, 804nn3,5
Wilson, J. Dover, 874, 875n4
Wilson, Woodrow, 334, 338n10
Winckelmann, Johann, 198, 200n23
Winnington-Ingram, Arthur Foley, 832n5
Woodward, E. L., 849, 850n5
Woolf, Leonard, xxxi, xxxvi, 367n16, 445nn2,3, 534nn6,15, 546–47n1, 837
Woolf, Virginia, xxix, xxxi–xxxii, xln59, 304n2, 347n16, 365, 367n16, 368nn26,28, 385n33, 413n2, 414n9, 415n12, 417n4, 428, 452, 453n11, 509n1, 527nn13,17, 533n1, 534nn6,15, 537n1, 546–47, 548, 563n1
Wordsworth, William, xxii, xxiii, 52n1, 78–79, 81n10, 84, 114n24, 183, 186n14, 279, 284n5, 294, 310, 319, 326, 335, 339n14, 350, 359n4, 392, 440, 529, 702n35, 736, 749
Wren, Christopher, 345, 348nn30–31, 349n34, 818, 832, 833nn6,10
Wulf, Maurice de, 645n30, 866n7, 870–73
Wundt, Wilhelm, 198, 200n22, 776n11
Wyld, Henry, 603, 607n3
Wyndham, George, xviii, xix, 26–32, 42, 46n8, 258n26, 286, 289n2, 407, 409n9

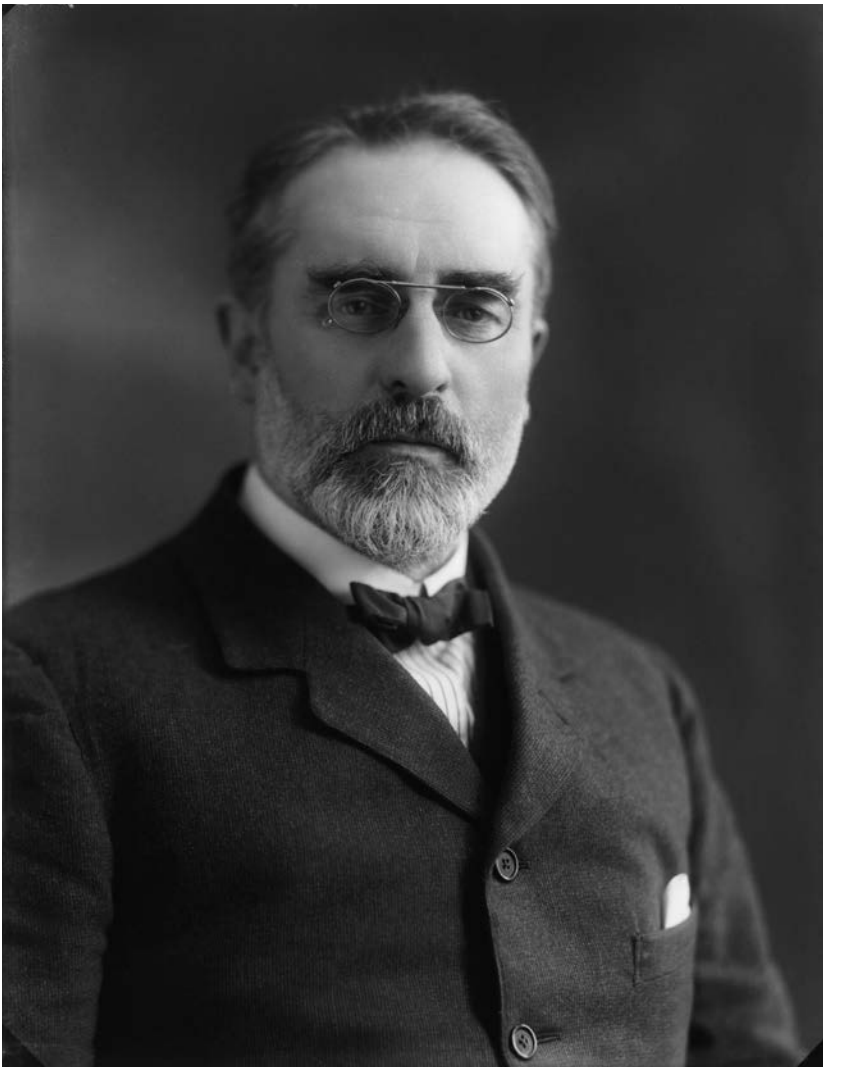
Yarrow, Duncan, 525, 527n15, 533, 535n21
Yealey, Francis Joseph, 665n22
Yeats, J. B., 74, 76n7
Yeats, W. B., xvii, 72–76, 129, 141, 174n4, 223n12, 310, 337, 390, 392n2, 402, 425–26, 449–50, 453n9, 478, 480nn1,8, 485, 487n4, 488nn11–12, 559, 625n15, 737, 779, 780n8
Young, Edward, 736, 740n32

Zabarella, Giacomo (or Jacopo), xxxi, 133, 135n4, 838, 841n11
Zeno, 227, 234n3
Zimmern, Alfred Eckhard, 198, 201n24

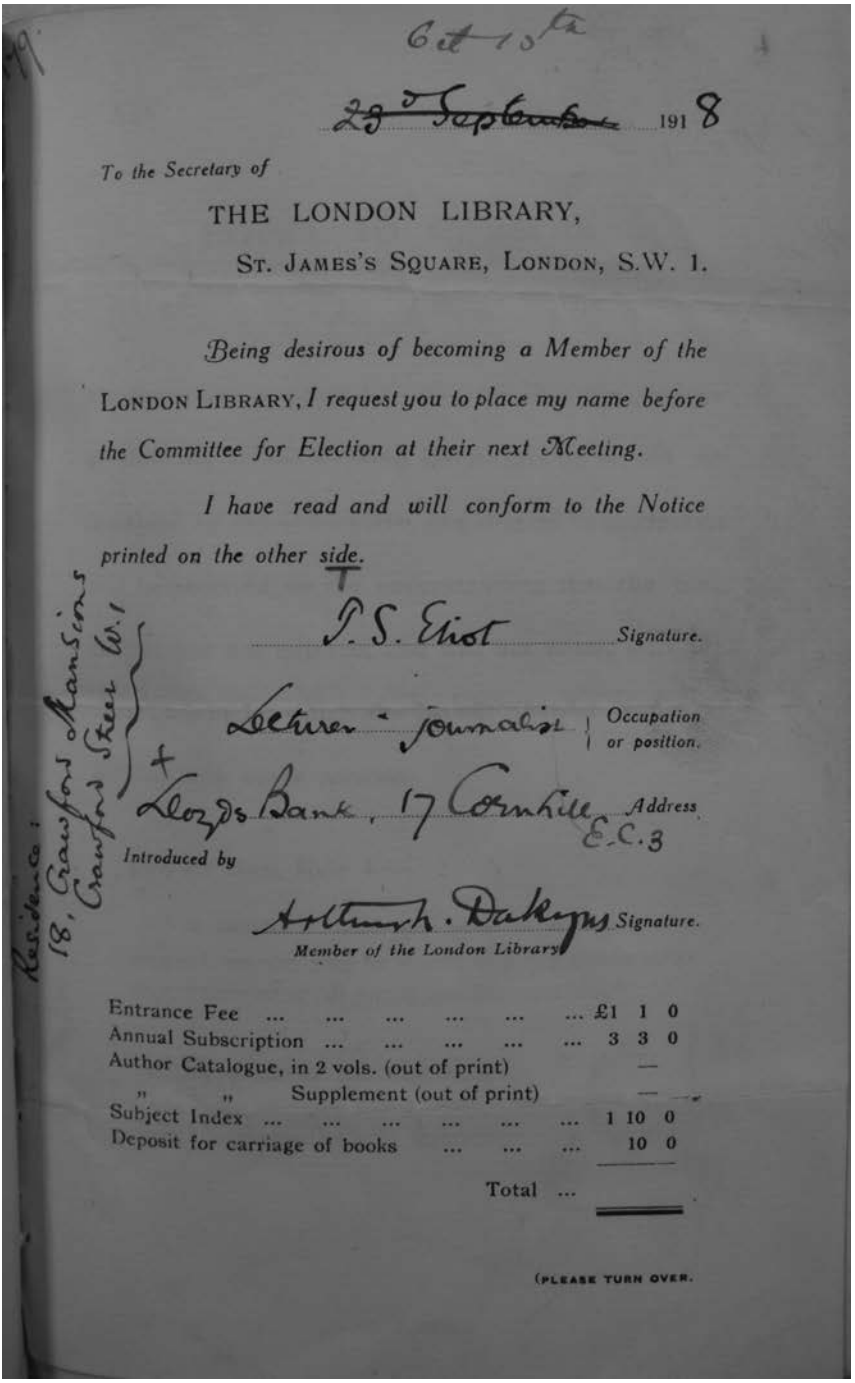
1. George Wyndham



2. George Saintsbury



3. J. M. Robertson



Oct 15th

29th September 1918

To the Secretary of

THE LONDON LIBRARY,

ST. JAMES'S SQUARE, LONDON, S.W. 1.

Being desirous of becoming a Member of the LONDON LIBRARY, *I request you to place my name before the Committee for Election at their next Meeting.*

I have read and will conform to the Notice printed on the other side.

T. S. Eliot — *Signature.*

Lecturer - journalist — *Occupation or position.*

Lloyds Bank, 17 Cornhill E.C.3 — *Address*

Residence: 18, Crawford Mansions, Crawford Street W.1

Introduced by

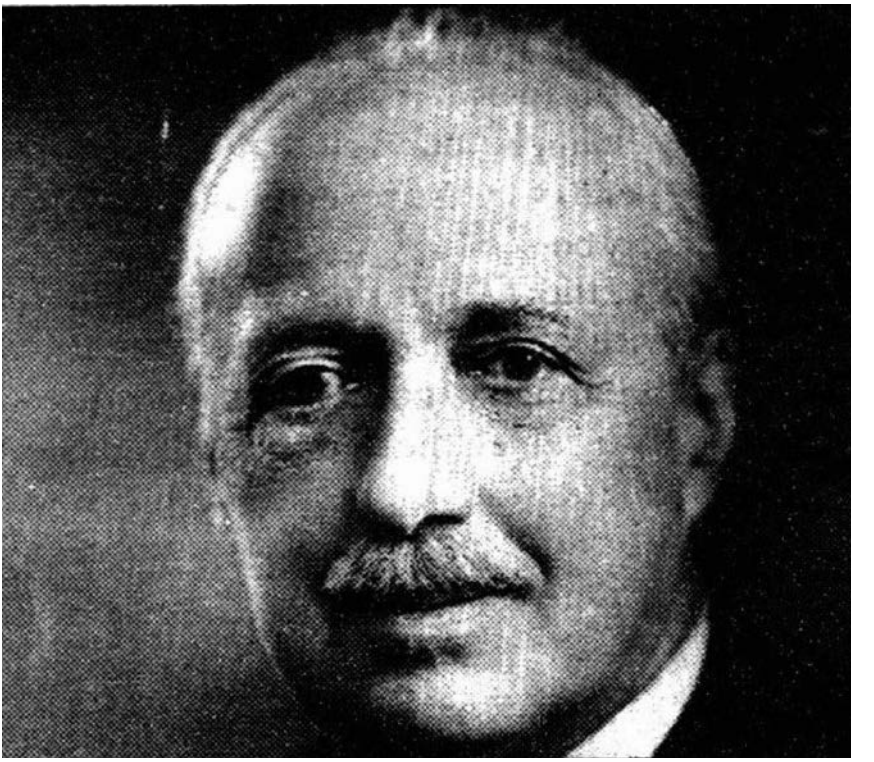
Arthur H. Dakyns — *Signature.*

Member of the London Library

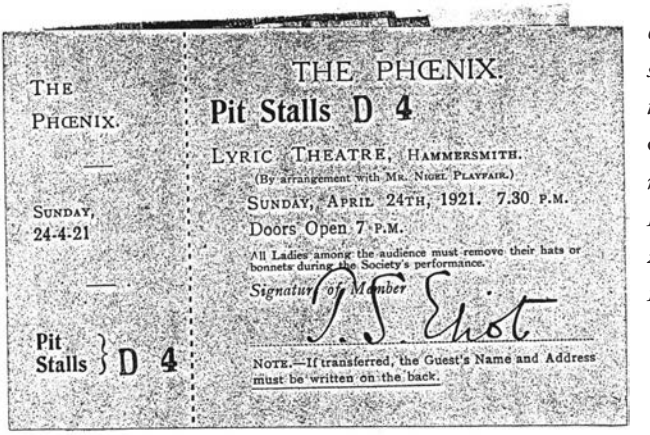
Entrance Fee	£1 1 0
Annual Subscription	3 3 0
Author Catalogue, in 2 vols. (out of print)	—
" " Supplement (out of print)	—
Subject Index	1 10 0
Deposit for carriage of books	10 0
Total ...	

(PLEASE TURN OVER.

4. T. S. Eliot's completed application for membership to the London Library



5. Bruce Richmond, editor of The Times Literary Supplement


THE PHŒNIX.

SUNDAY, 24-4-21

Pit Stalls } D 4

THE PHŒNIX.

Pit Stalls D 4

LYRIC THEATRE, HAMMERSMITH.

(By arrangement with MR. NIGEL PLAYFAIR.)

SUNDAY, APRIL 24TH, 1921. 7.30 P.M.

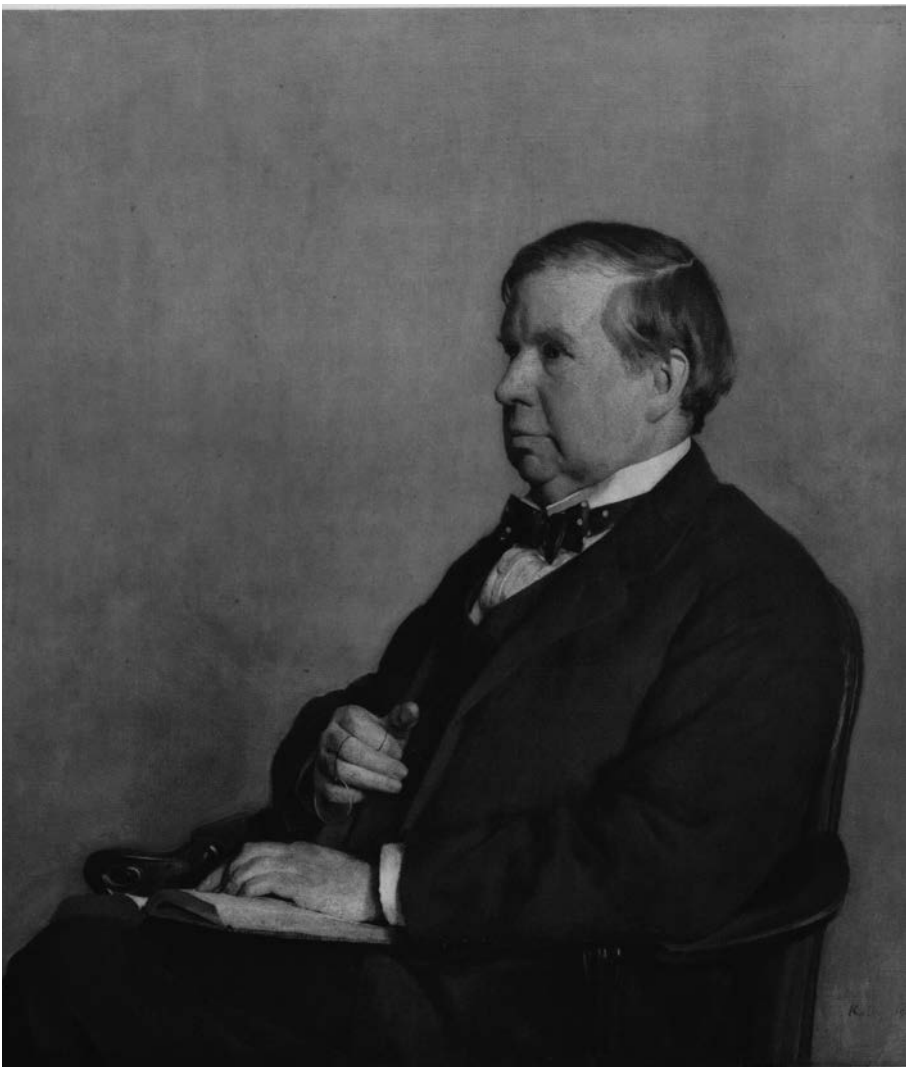
Doors Open 7 P.M.

All Ladies among the audience must remove their hats or bonnets during the Society's performance.

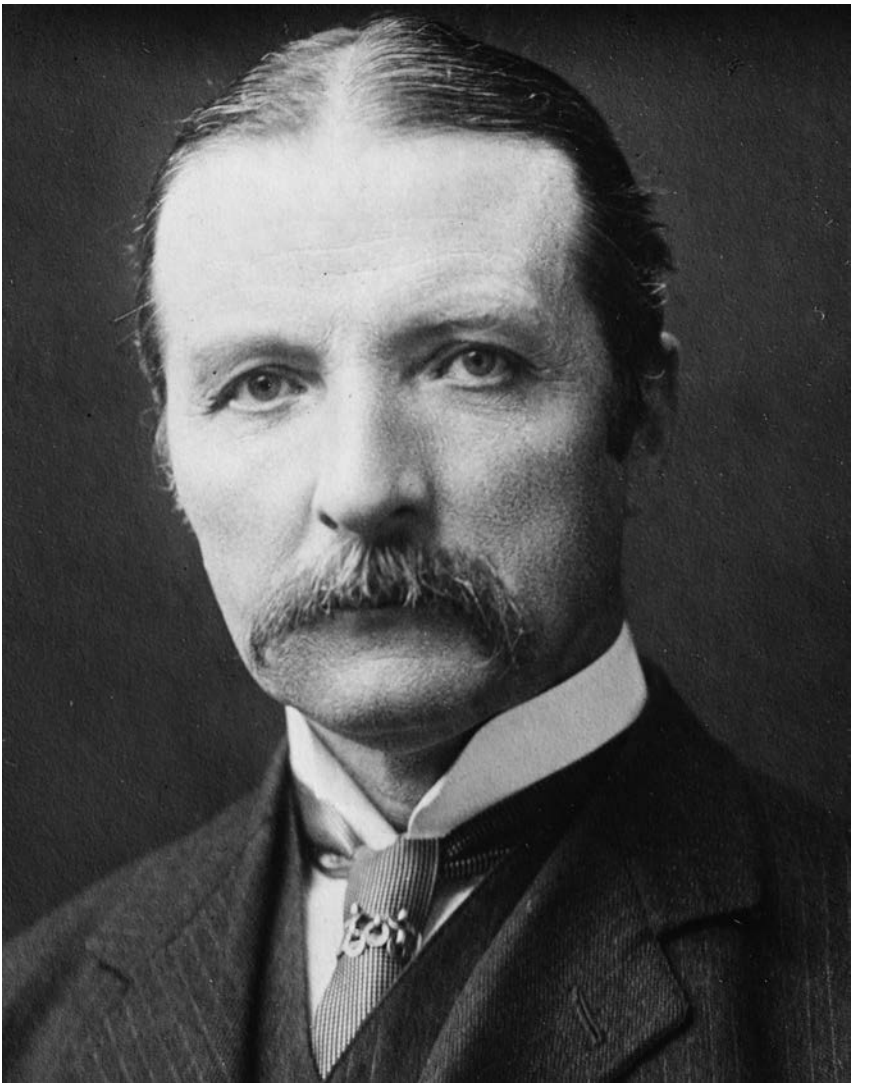
Signature of Member T. S. Eliot

NOTE.—If transferred, the Guest's Name and Address must be written on the back.

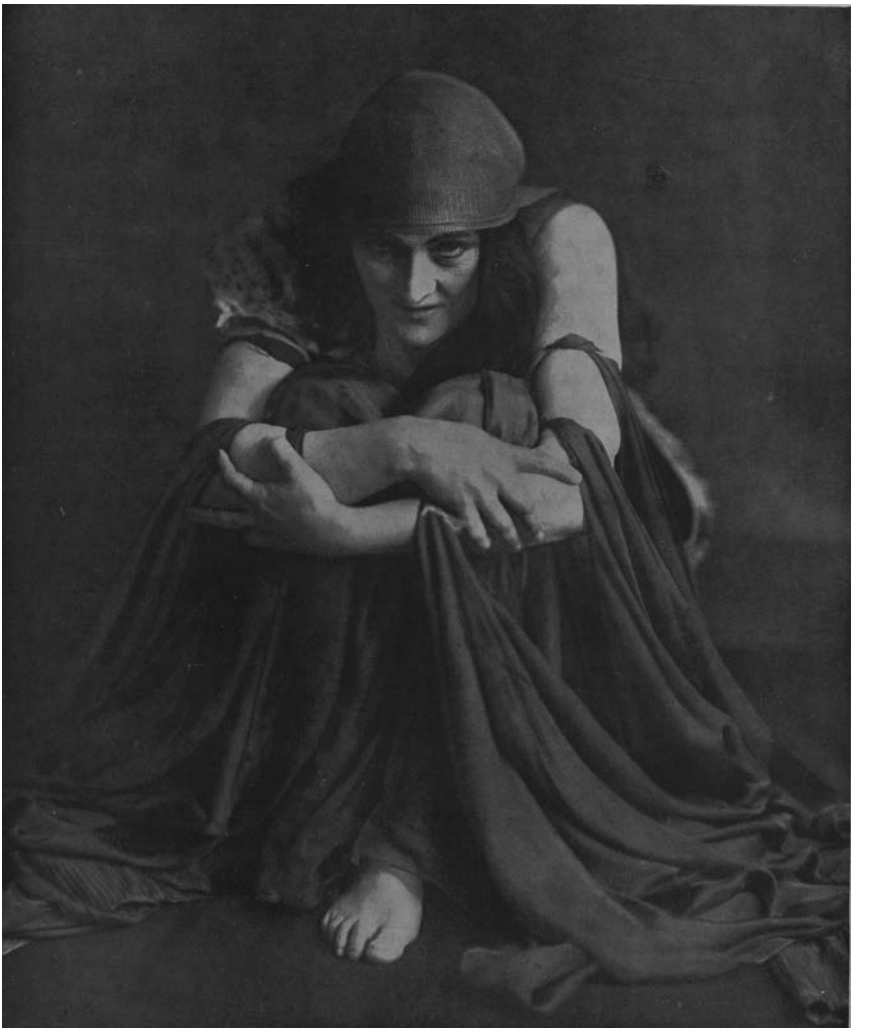
6. T. S. Eliot's signed ticket to The Witch of Edmonton, *revived by the Phoenix Society on 24 and 26 April 1921*



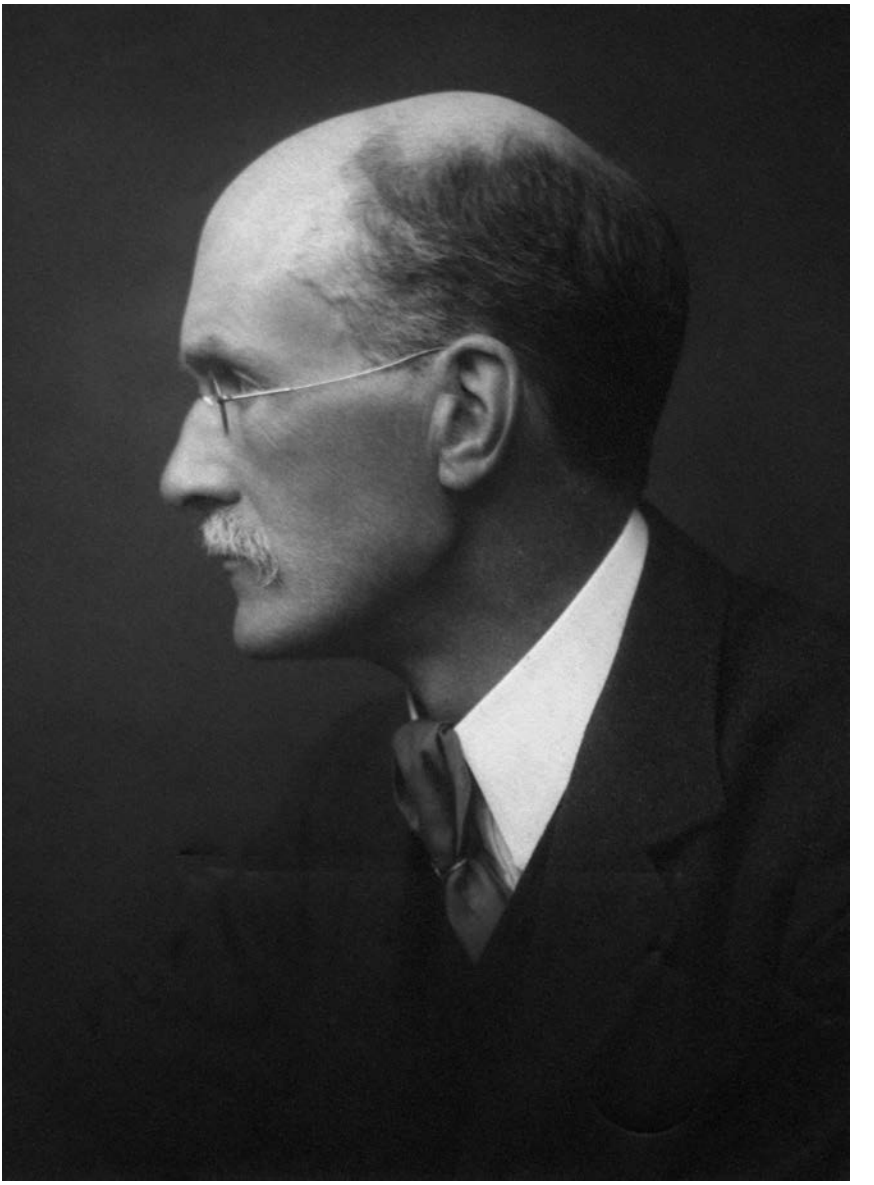
7. Charles Whibley



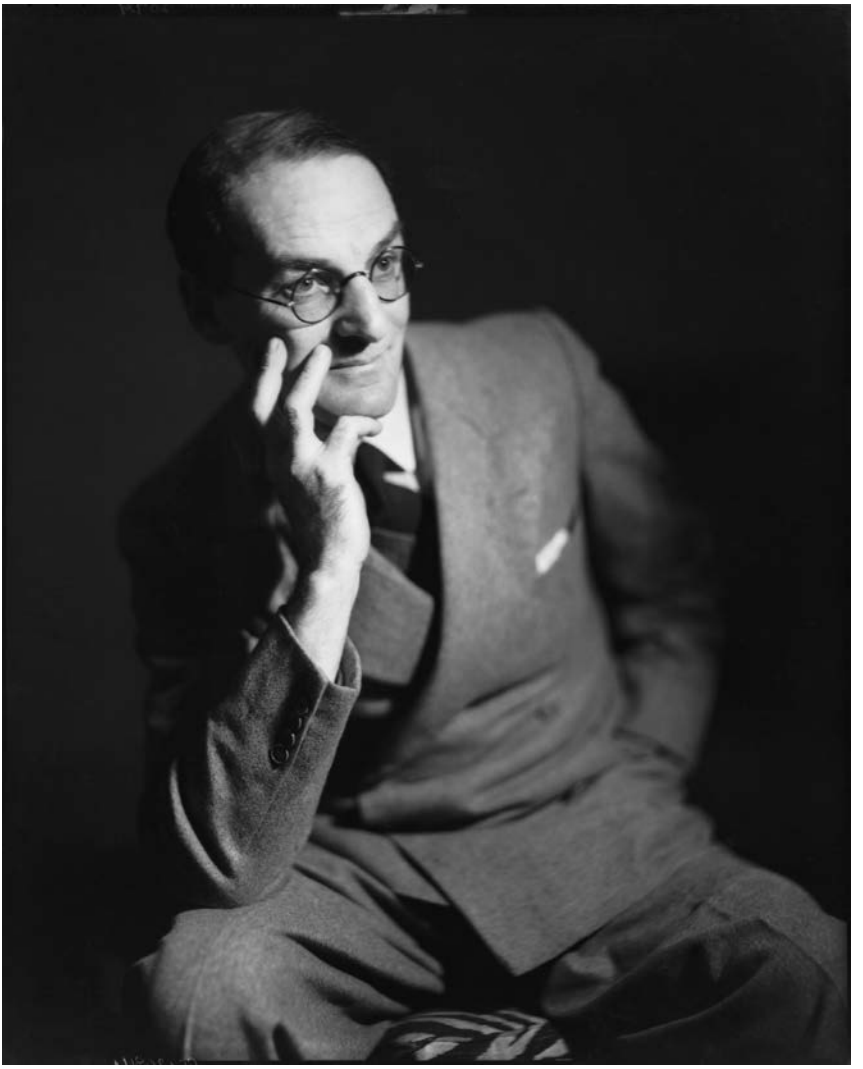
8. William Archer



9. Sybil Thorndike as the lead in the 1920 production of Gilbert Murray's translation of Euripides' Medea *at the Holborn Empire (*Illustrated London News, *13 March 1920, front page)*

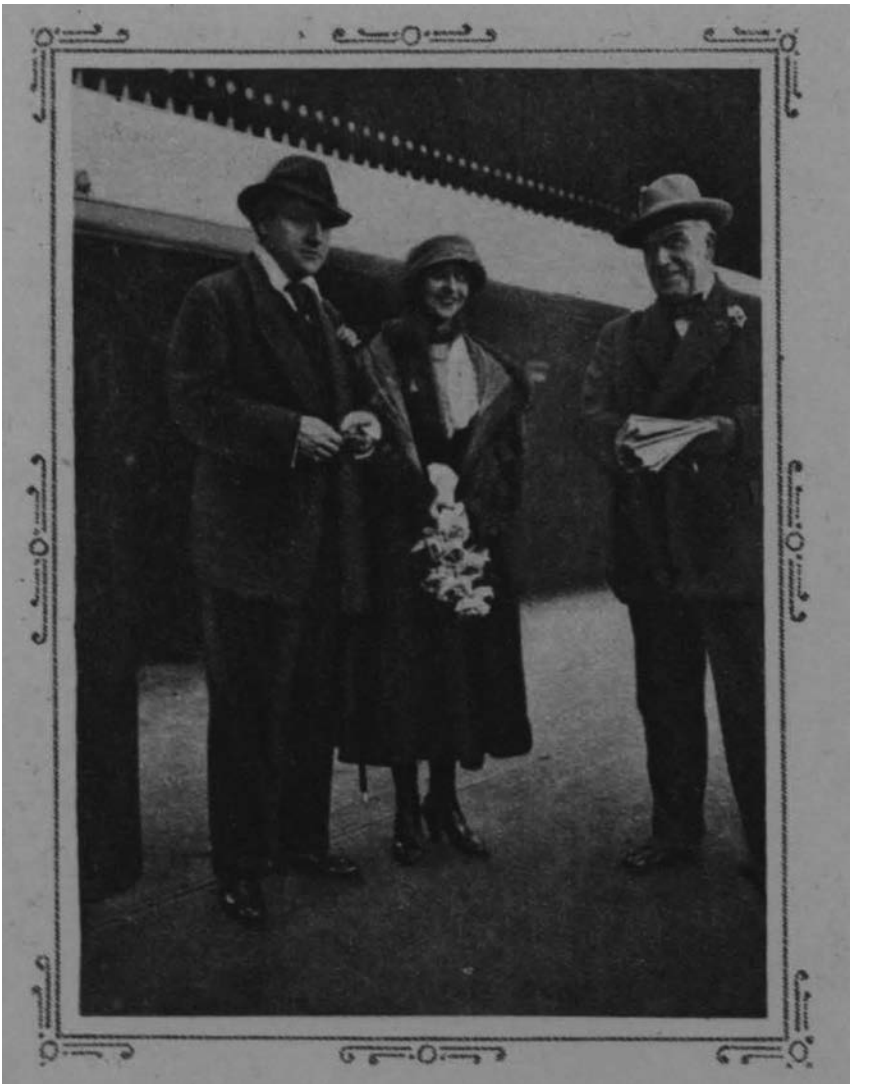


10. Gilbert Murray

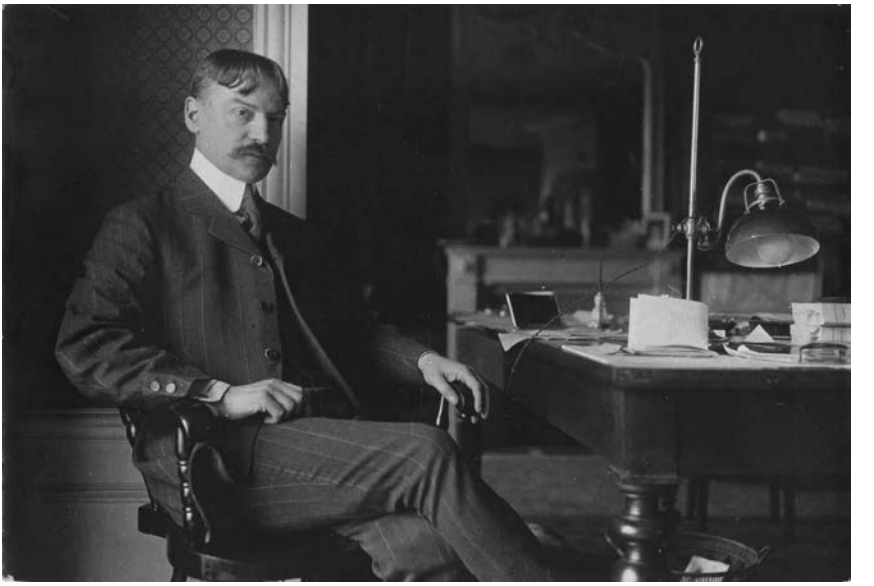


11. John Middleton Murry

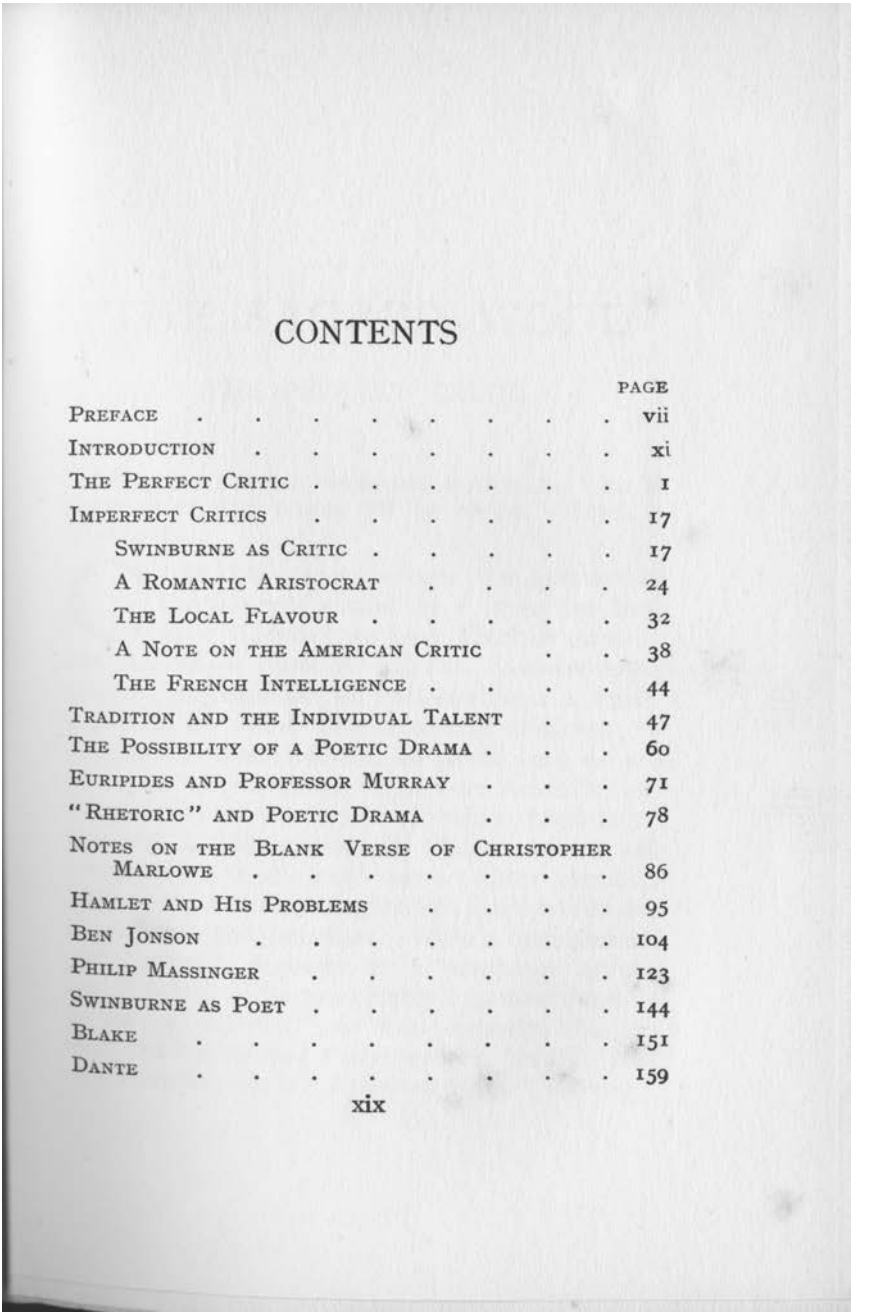
12. Scofield Thayer, editor of The Dial



*13. The Guitrys: Lucien and Sacha Guitry, with Yvonne Printemps (*Illustrated London News, *15 April 1922, 548)*



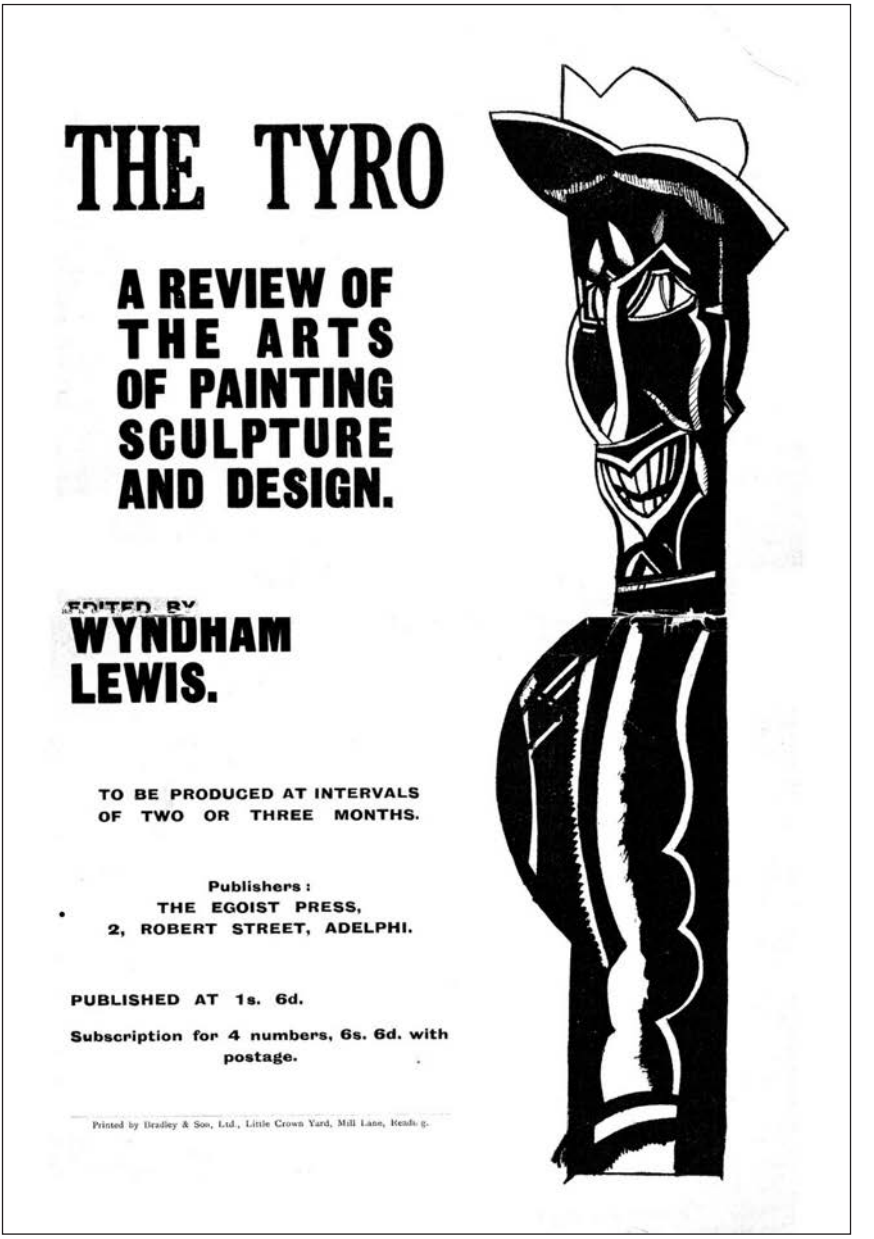
14. Julien Benda



CONTENTS

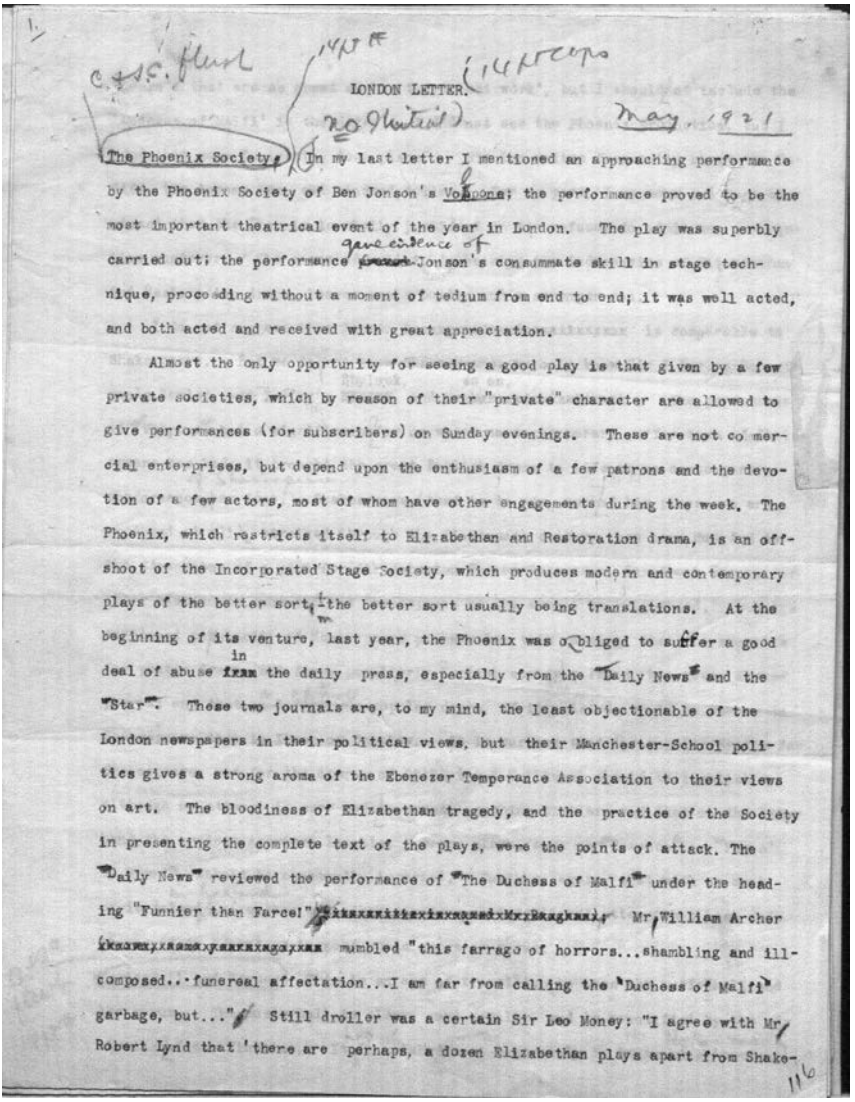
	PAGE
PREFACE	vii
INTRODUCTION	xi
THE PERFECT CRITIC	1
IMPERFECT CRITICS	17
SWINBURNE AS CRITIC	17
A ROMANTIC ARISTOCRAT	24
THE LOCAL FLAVOUR	32
A NOTE ON THE AMERICAN CRITIC	38
THE FRENCH INTELLIGENCE	44
TRADITION AND THE INDIVIDUAL TALENT	47
THE POSSIBILITY OF A POETIC DRAMA	60
EURIPIDES AND PROFESSOR MURRAY	71
"RHETORIC" AND POETIC DRAMA	78
NOTES ON THE BLANK VERSE OF CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE	86
HAMLET AND HIS PROBLEMS	95
BEN JONSON	104
PHILIP MASSINGER	123
SWINBURNE AS POET	144
BLAKE	151
DANTE	159

15. Table of Contents, The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism *(1920: 2nd ed., 1928)*


THE TYRO
A REVIEW OF THE ARTS OF PAINTING SCULPTURE AND DESIGN.
EDITED BY
WYNDHAM LEWIS.
TO BE PRODUCED AT INTERVALS OF TWO OR THREE MONTHS.
Publishers:
THE EGOIST PRESS,
2, ROBERT STREET, ADELPHI.
PUBLISHED AT 1s. 6d.
Subscription for 4 numbers, 6s. 6d. with postage.
Printed by Bradley & Son, Ltd., Little Crown Yard, Mill Lane, Kensington.

16. Cover of Wyndham Lewis's review, The Tyro: A Review of the Arts of Painting, Sculpture, and Design, *1 (1922)*

17. Richard Aldington



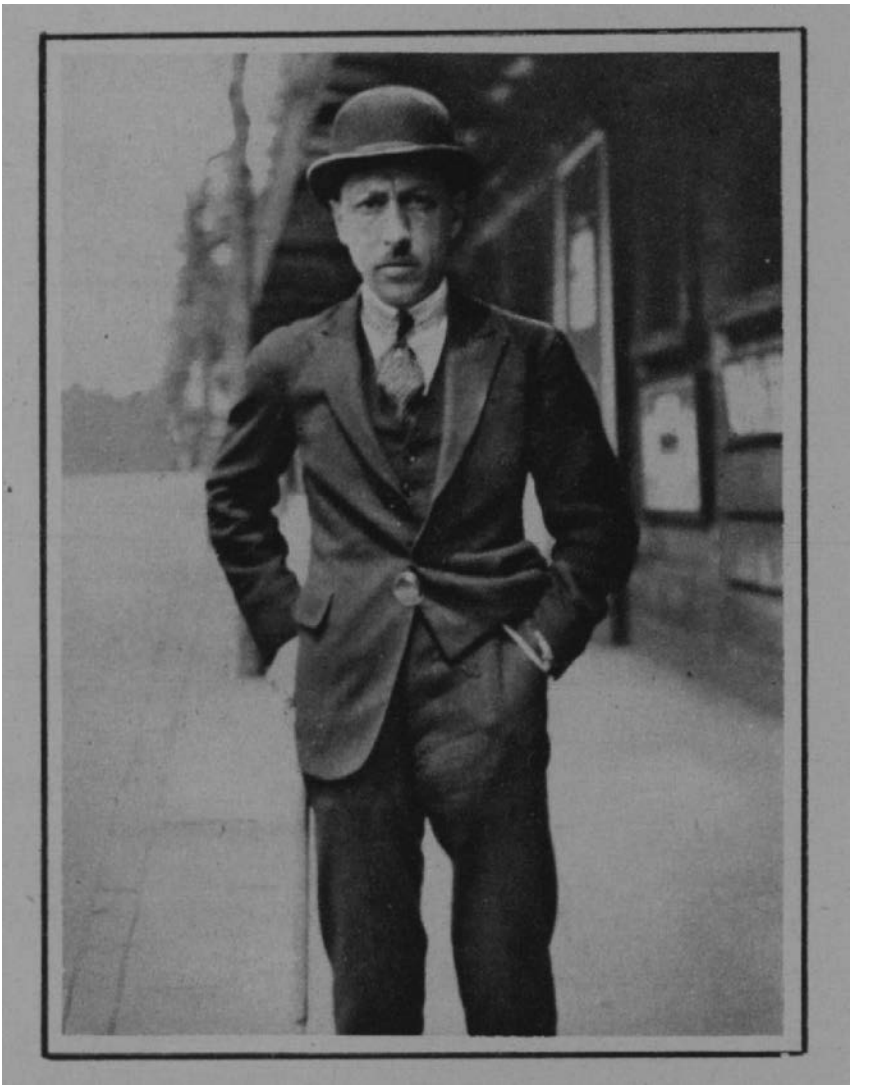
LONDON LETTER. May, 1921

The Phoenix Society. In my last letter I mentioned an approaching performance by the Phoenix Society of Ben Jonson's Volpone; the performance proved to be the most important theatrical event of the year in London. The play was superbly carried out; the performance gave evidence of Jonson's consummate skill in stage technique, proceeding without a moment of tedium from end to end; it was well acted, and both acted and received with great appreciation.

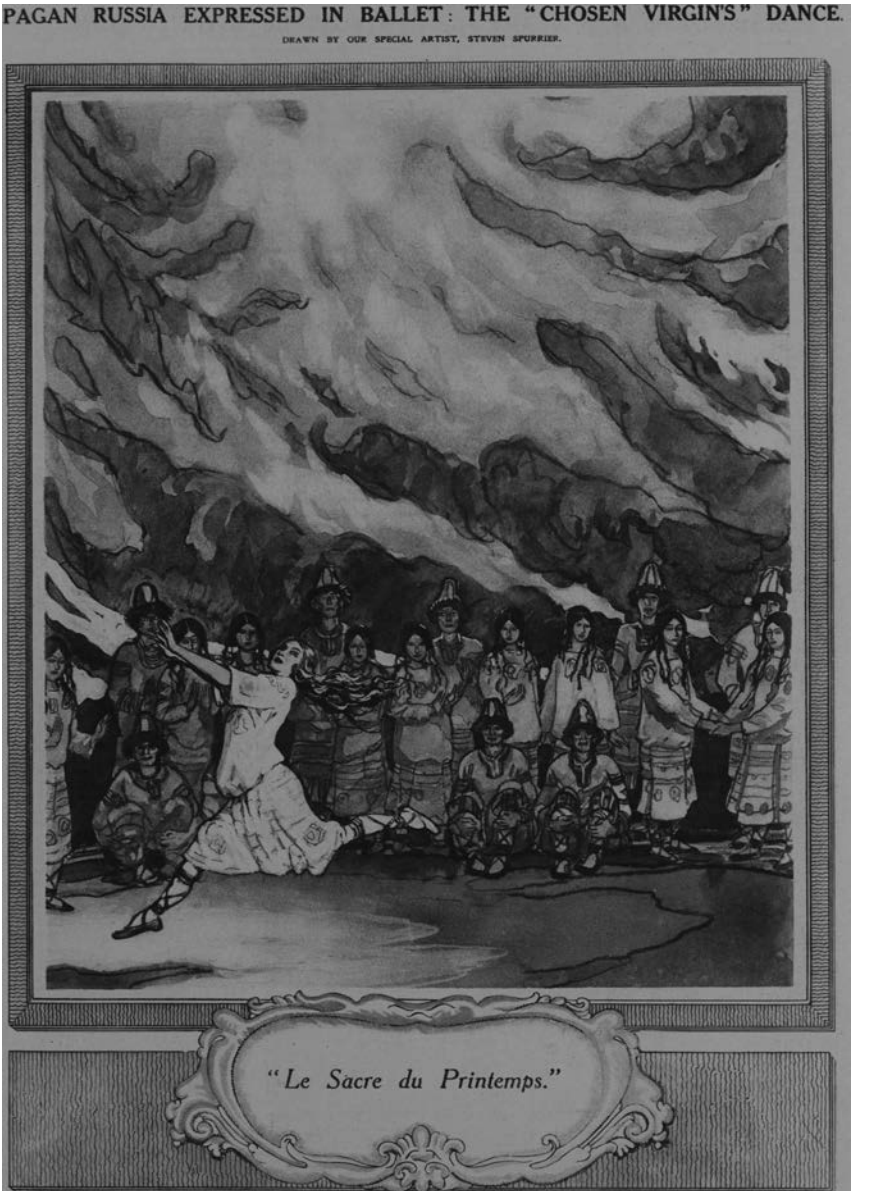
Almost the only opportunity for seeing a good play is that given by a few private societies, which by reason of their "private" character are allowed to give performances (for subscribers) on Sunday evenings. These are not commercial enterprises, but depend upon the enthusiasm of a few patrons and the devotion of a few actors, most of whom have other engagements during the week. The Phoenix, which restricts itself to Elizabethan and Restoration drama, is an offshoot of the Incorporated Stage Society, which produces modern and contemporary plays of the better sort, the better sort usually being translations. At the beginning of its venture, last year, the Phoenix was obliged to suffer a good deal of abuse in the daily press, especially from the "Daily News" and the "Star". These two journals are, to my mind, the least objectionable of the London newspapers in their political views, but their Manchester-School politics gives a strong aroma of the Ebenezer Temperance Association to their views on art. The bloodiness of Elizabethan tragedy, and the practice of the Society in presenting the complete text of the plays, were the points of attack. The "Daily News" reviewed the performance of "The Duchess of Malfi" under the heading "Funnier than Farce!" Mr. William Archer mumbled "this farrago of horrors...shambling and ill-composed..funereal affectation...I am far from calling the 'Duchess of Malfi' garbage, but..." Still droller was a certain Sir Leo Money: "I agree with Mr. Robert Lynd that 'there are perhaps, a dozen Elizabethan plays apart from Shake-

18. Facsimile, first page of revised typescript of "London Letter: May, 1921," Dial *70 (June 1921)*

19. Lydia Lopokova

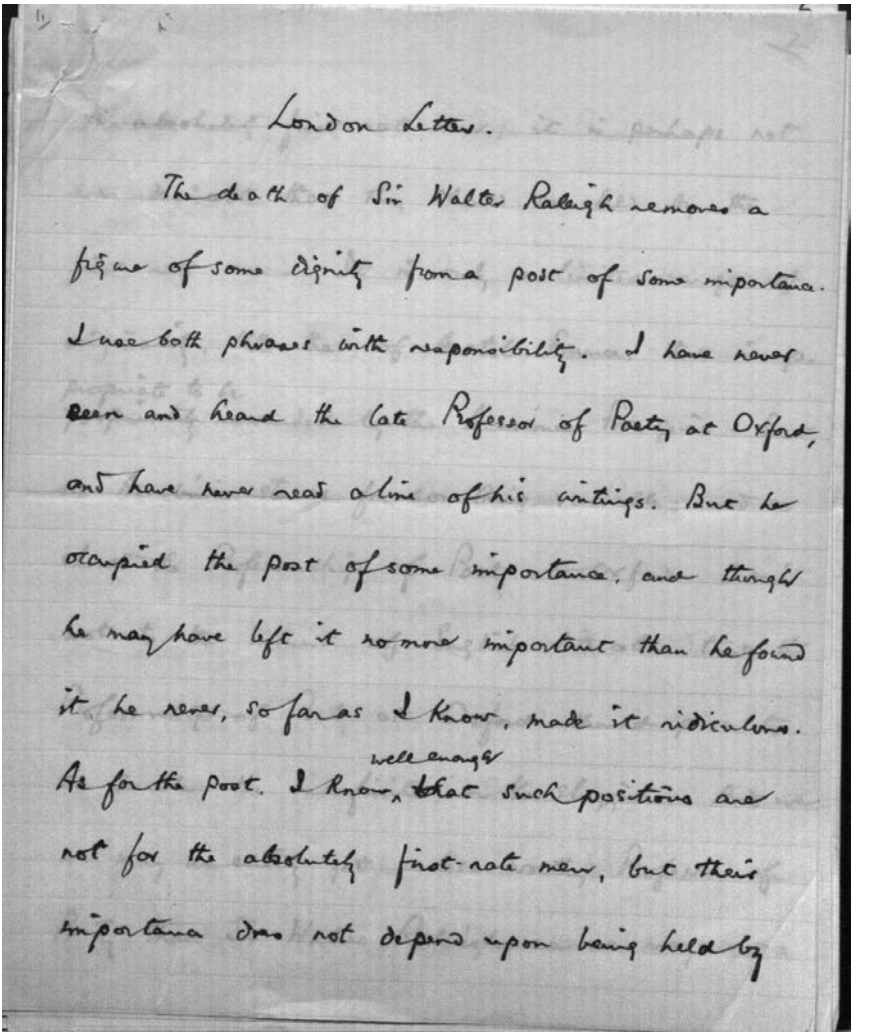


*20. Igor Stravinsky (*Illustrated London News, *25 June 1921, 870)*


PAGAN RUSSIA EXPRESSED IN BALLET: THE "CHOSEN VIRGIN'S" DANCE.
DRAWN BY OUR SPECIAL ARTIST, STEVEN SPURRIER.
"Le Sacre du Printemps."

21. The Russian Ballet, Lydia Sokolova in the 1921 revival of Stravinsky's Le Sacre du Printemps *at the Prince's Theatre (*Illustrated London News, *2 July 1921, 7).*

22. Mistinguett (Jeanne-Marie Bourgeois)



London Letter.

The death of Sir Walter Raleigh removes a figure of some dignity from a post of some importance. I use both phrases with responsibility. I have never seen and heard the late Professor of Poetry at Oxford, and have never read a line of his writings. But he occupied the post of some importance, and though he may have left it no more important than he found it he never, so far as I know, made it ridiculous. As for the post. I know well enough that such positions are not for the absolutely first-rate men, but their importance does not depend upon being held by

23. Facsimile, first page of unrevised holograph of "London Letter: June, 1922," Dial *73 (July 1922)*

BEL ESPRIT.

I HEREBY pledge myself to contribute £.....yearly
$.....yearly
for.....years
to (*a*) T. S. Eliot.

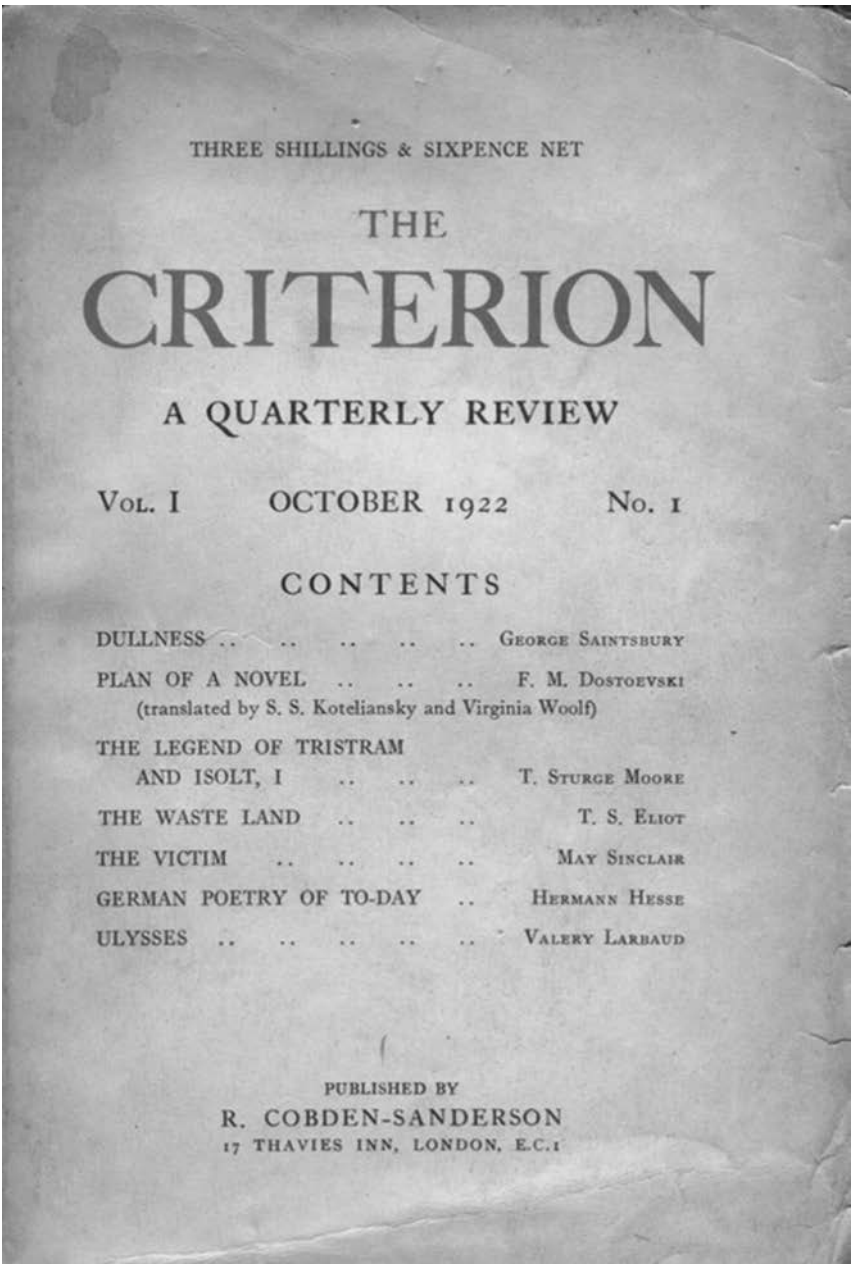
(*b*) To Bel Esprit for T. S. Eliot (in which case a treasurer of Bel Esprit, R. ALDINGTON, Malthouse Cottage, Padworth, Reading, Berks, acting in England. Or—EZRA POUND, 70 bis rue Notre Dame des Champs, Paris, acting in France, stands personally responsible for the transmission of funds to Mr. Eliot).

This money is given on the understanding that Mr. Eliot shall devote his entire time to literary work. No restriction is placed on the nature of that work, and I, the present donor, will make no effort to influence either the subject-matter or the manner of his writing save by such literary criticism as any critic of literature might indulge in.

I will pay this money { annually / semi-annually } beginning
.....date.

(Signature).....

24. Facsimile, "Bel Esprit" subscription form



THREE SHILLINGS & SIXPENCE NET

THE

CRITERION

A QUARTERLY REVIEW

VOL. I OCTOBER 1922 NO. 1

CONTENTS

DULLNESS .. .. GEORGE SAINTSBURY

PLAN OF A NOVEL .. .. .. F. M. DOSTOEVSKI
(translated by S. S. Koteliansky and Virginia Woolf)

THE LEGEND OF TRISTRAM
AND ISOLT, I .. .. .. T. STURGE MOORE

THE WASTE LAND .. .. .. T. S. ELIOT

THE VICTIM .. .. MAY SINCLAIR

GERMAN POETRY OF TO-DAY .. HERMANN HESSE

ULYSSES .. .. VALERY LARBAUD

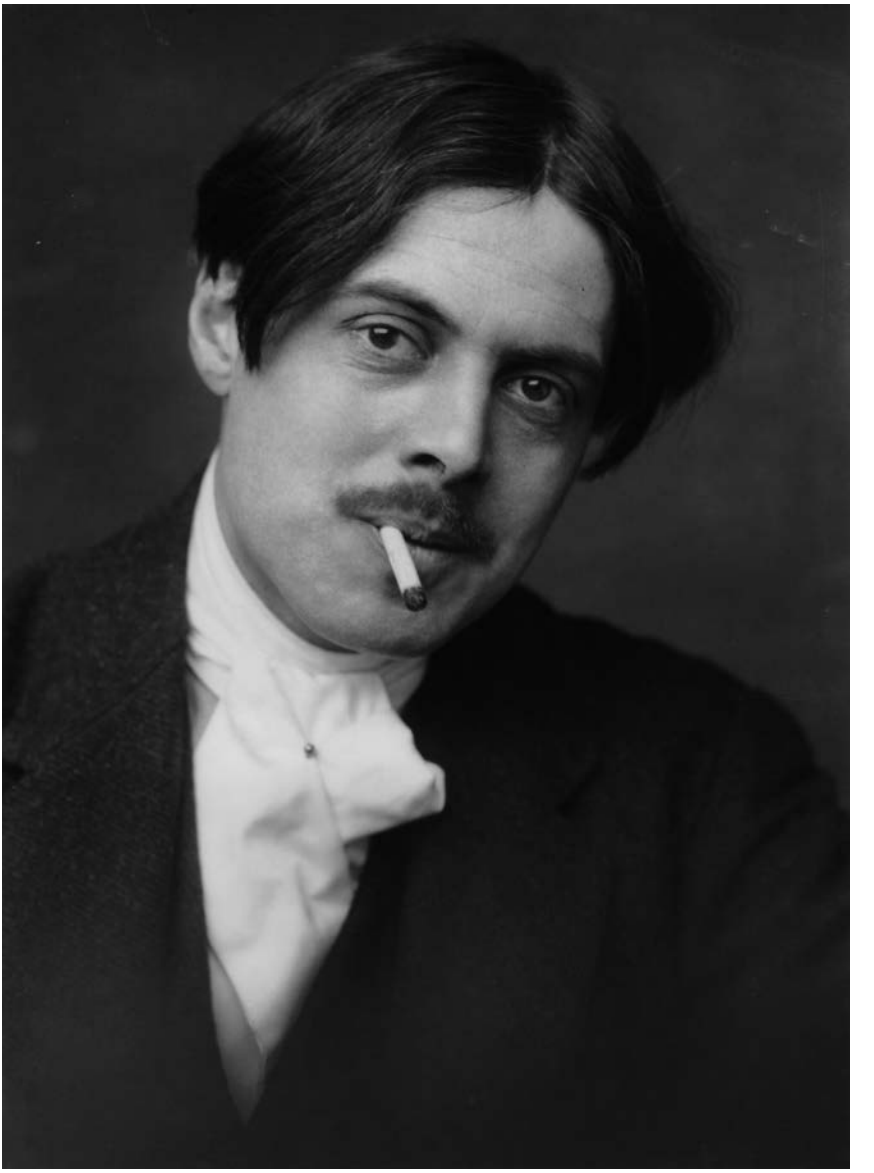
PUBLISHED BY
R. COBDEN-SANDERSON
17 THAVIES INN, LONDON, E.C.1

25. Cover page, The Criterion: A Quarterly Review, *1 (October 1922)*

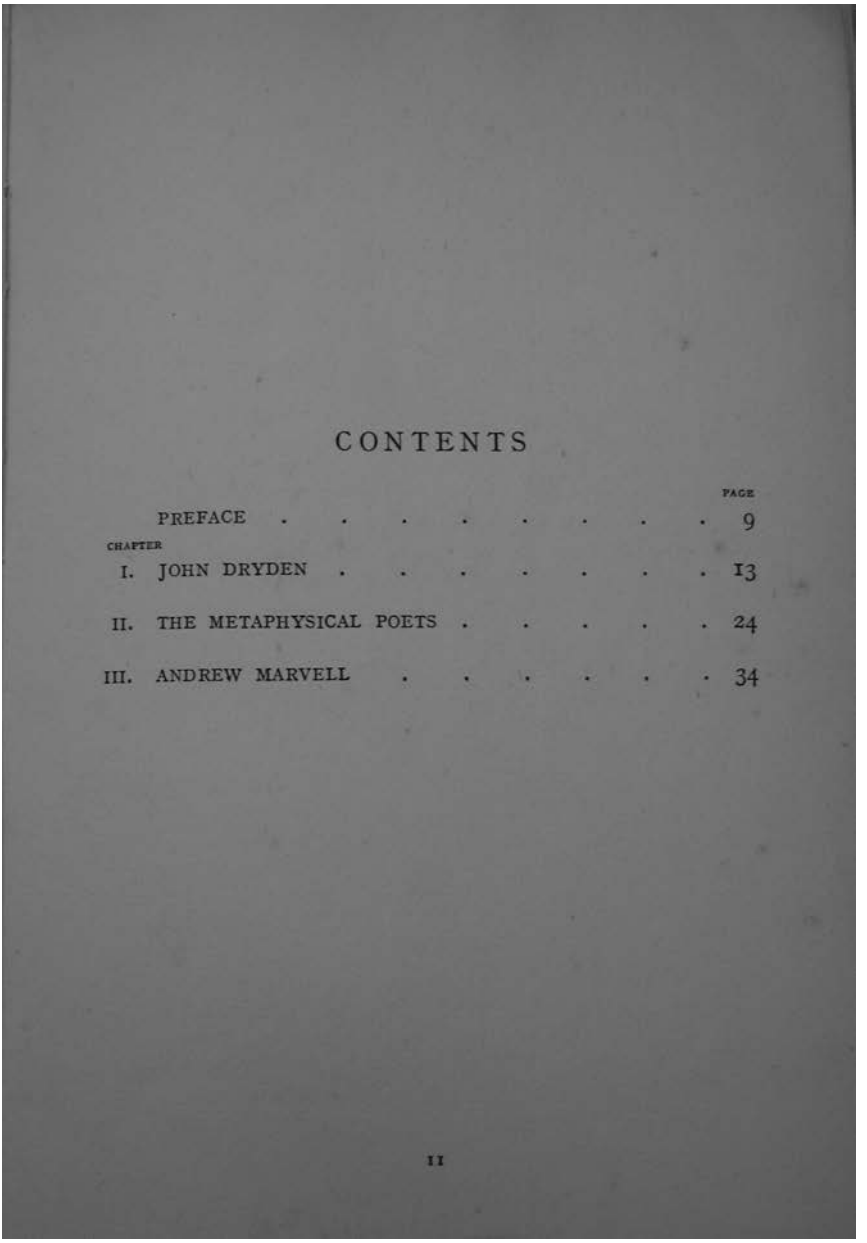
26. Marie Lloyd

27. Sarah Bernhardt

28. Léonide Massine, as the Chinese Conjurer in Jean Cocteau's Parade *(London, 1919)*



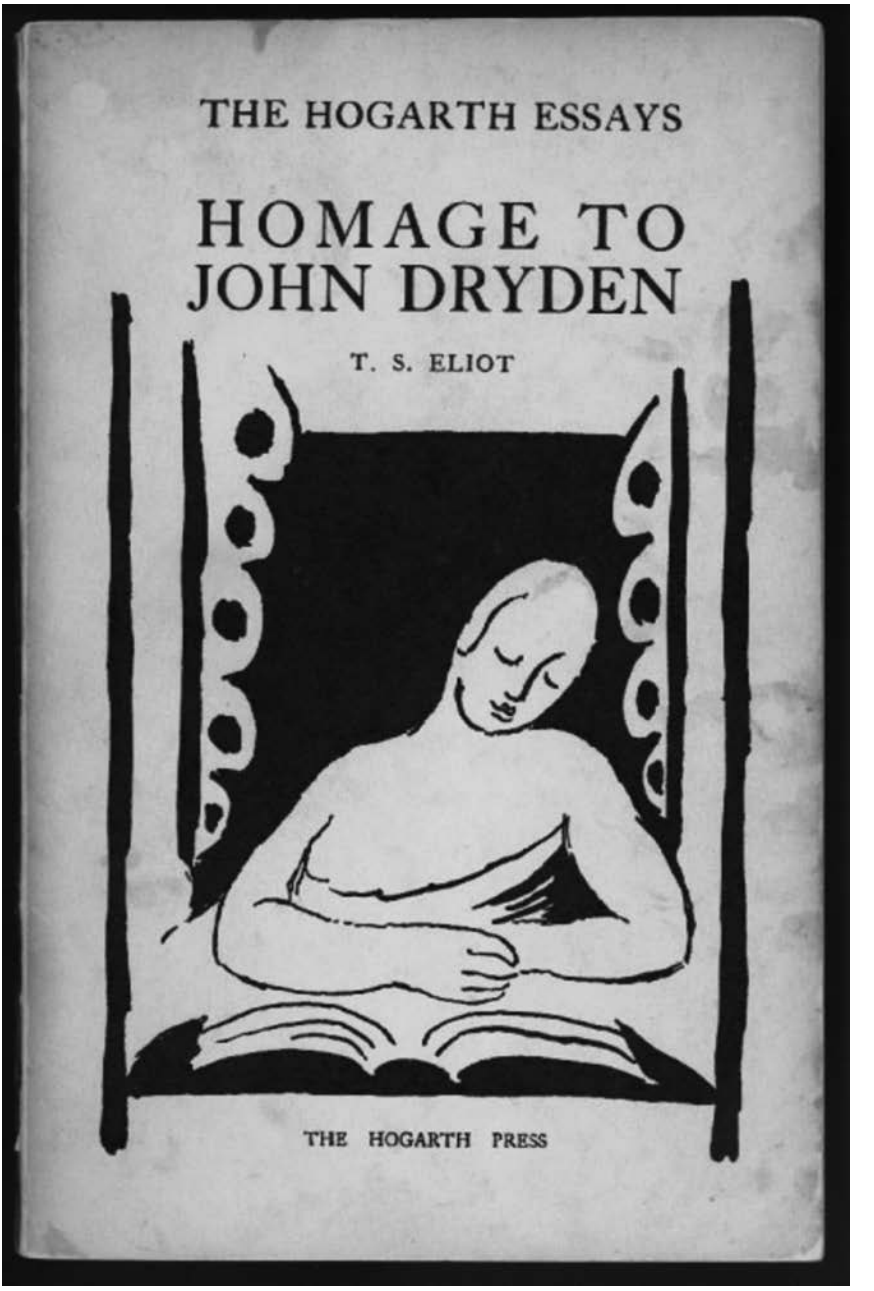
29. Wyndham Lewis



CONTENTS

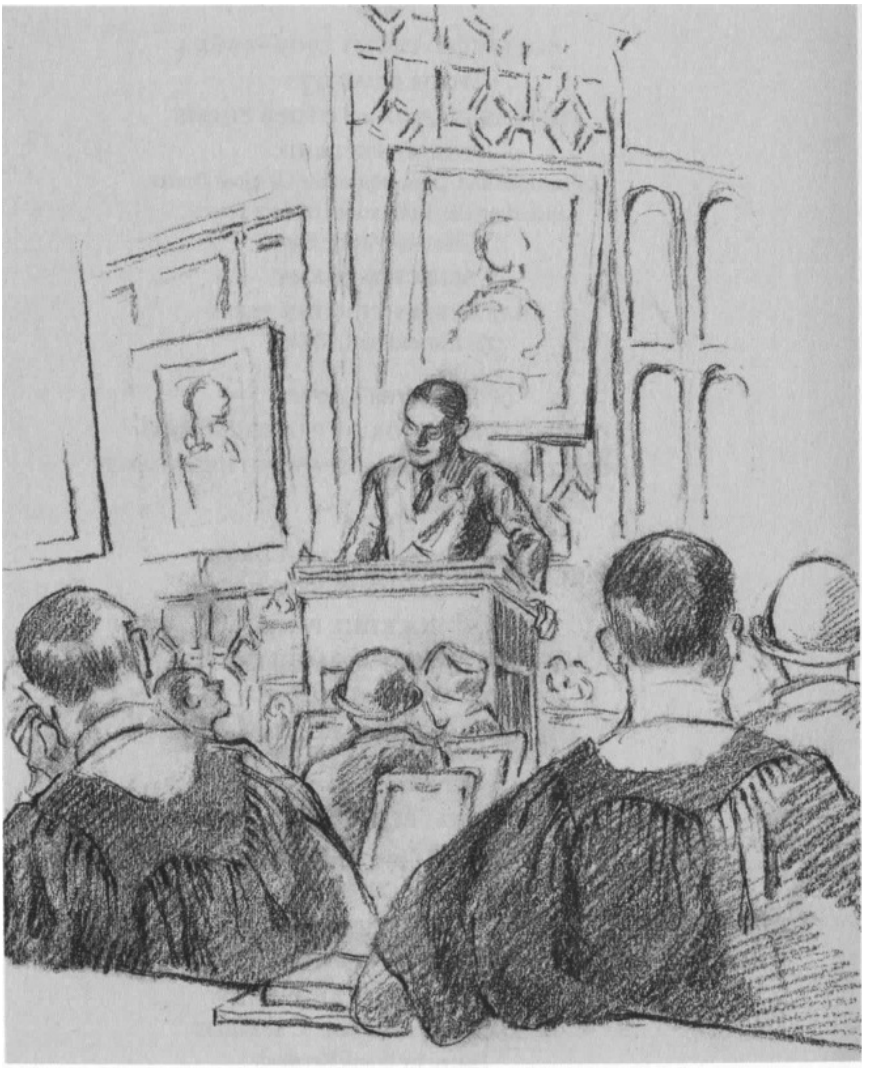
CHAPTER		PAGE
	PREFACE	9
I.	JOHN DRYDEN	13
II.	THE METAPHYSICAL POETS	24
III.	ANDREW MARVELL	34

30. Table of Contents, Homage to John Dryden: Three Essays on Poetry of the Seventeenth Century *(1924)*

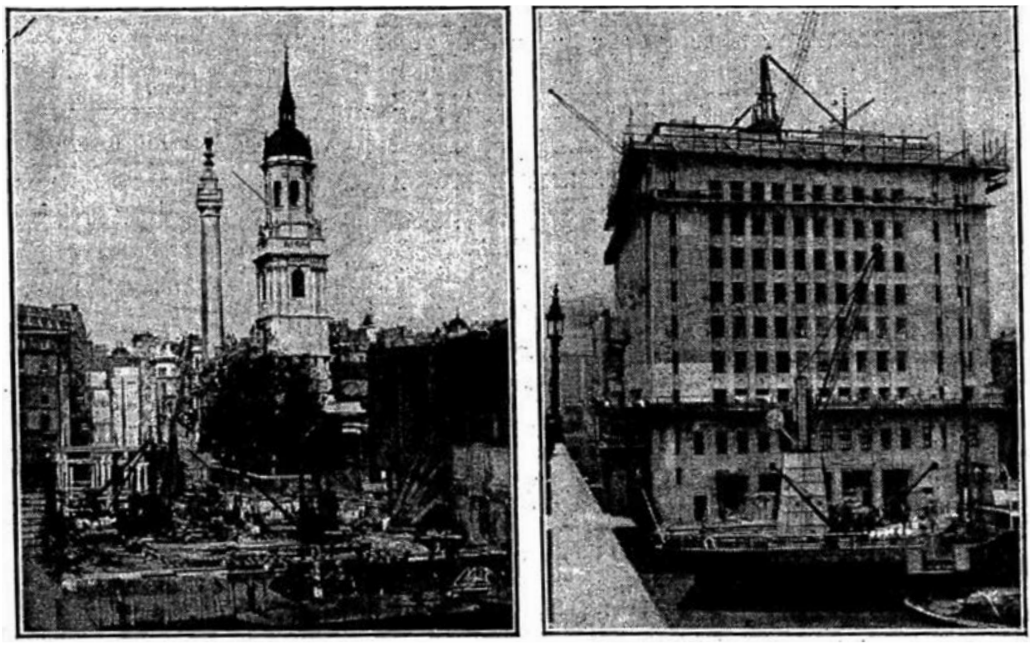


31. Cover design by Vanessa Bell, Homage to John Dryden: Three Essays on Poetry of the Seventeenth Century *(1924), number three in the Hogarth Essays series*

32. Jacques Rivière, editor of the NRF



33. Theresa Garrett Eliot's pencil drawing of T. S. Eliot delivering his final Clark lecture in the Hall of Trinity College, Cambridge, 9 March 1926



*34. The Church of St. Magnus the Martyr, London, before and during the construction of Adelaide House (*The Times, *19 March 1924, 18)*

The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot

ERRATA

Volume 2

p. 387: n. 4 – Existing note changed to end with colon instead of period, followed by: "Homage to / George Saintsbury / from his Sincere admirer / T. S. Eliot / 13.xi.24"

p. 443: last line of text, following "encouragement." – A superscript note number 12 has been added.

p. 444: following the last printed line of notes – A note 12 has been added, which reads: TSE echoes Kant's claim in the *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics* (1783) that David Hume awakened him from his "dogmatic slumber." *Kant's Prolegomena,* trans. Paul Carus (London: Kegan Paul, 1902), 7.

p. 754: n. 1, line 4 – "The Relativity of Moral Judgment" changed to read "The Relativity of the Moral Judgment"

p. 760: following "4. His Longer Poems" – On a new line has been added: "5. The Religion of XVII Century," to read:

> 5. The Religion of XVII Century
> (Donne's Relation to Elizabethan Drama?)
> Chapman. Compare with